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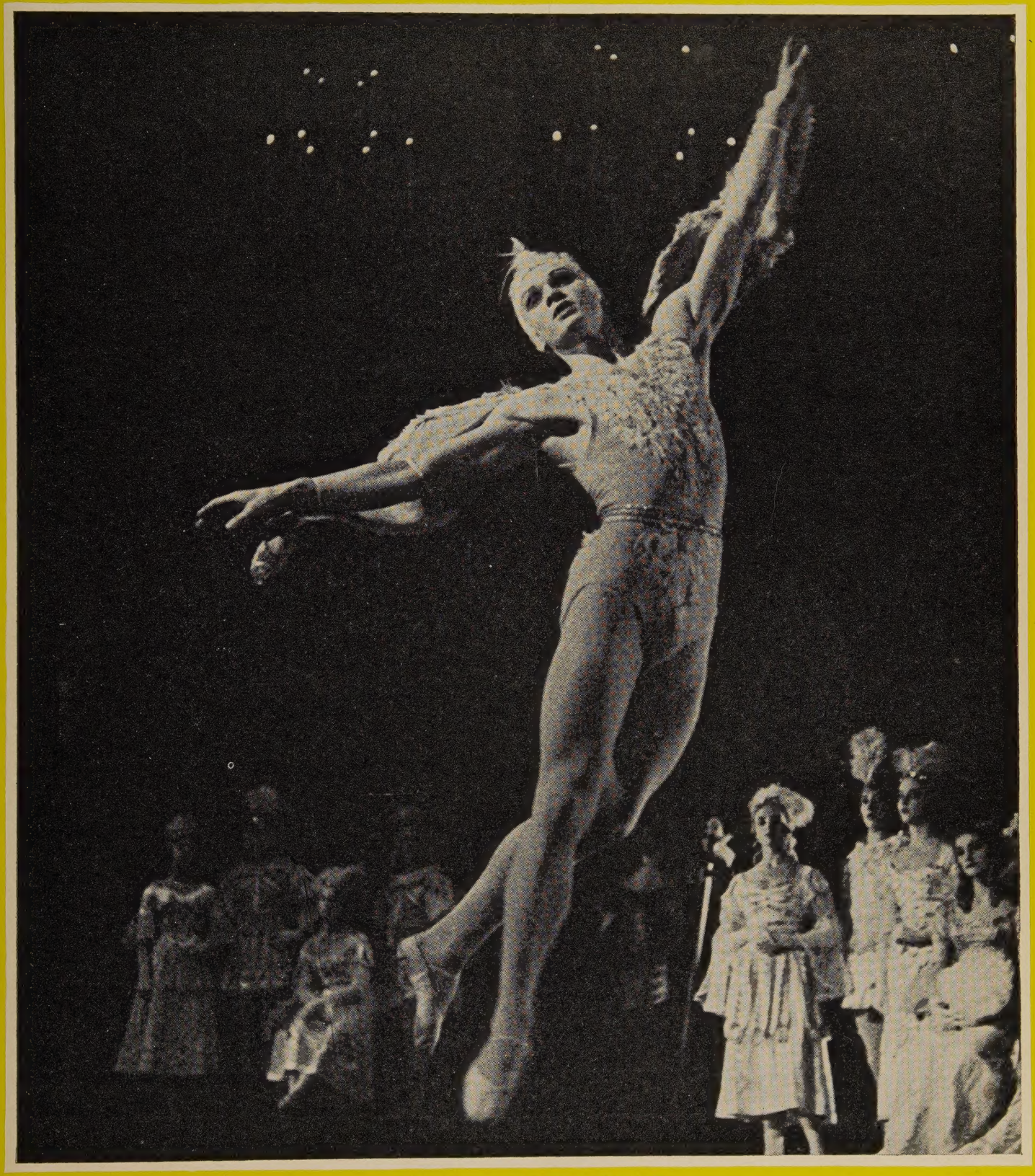

YURI SOLOVIEV

of the Leningrad State Kirov Ballet, now at Covent Garden, as the Bluebird in the last act of *The Sleeping Beauty*

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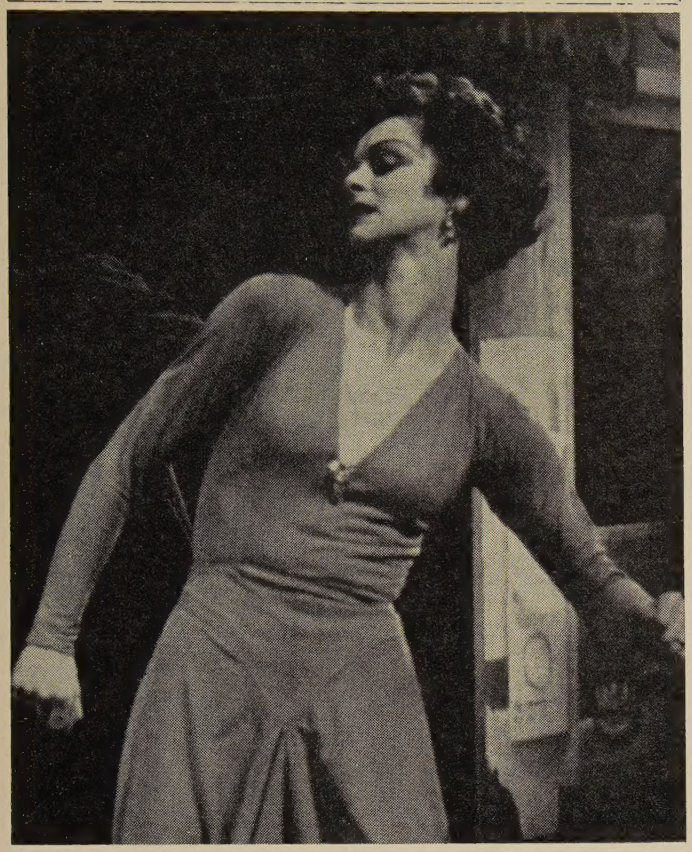
Personality of the Month



In MIRACLE IN THE GORBALS *Photo: Roy Round.*

JULIA FARRON

THE audience cheered ecstatically — no, more, with genuine warmth and affection — at her farewell, and afterwards so many kind words were said and written about her that for days her face must have been permanently red. But the truth is, that in many ways we in the audience and they in the company, tended to take Julia Farron almost for granted. We depended upon her dependability, we accepted her as one of our few truly mature artists, but because she has been part of the Royal Ballet for as long as most of us can remember, perhaps we never thought seriously enough about how important she was to us. Now she is gone, at least as a regular member of the company, we must hope and, so far as it is within our power, even insist that she return to us as a guest artist as frequenly as possible.

Julia Farron was one of the very first dancers ever to gain a scholarship to the then Sadler's Wells Ballet School. She made her début as the principal dancer in pantomime at Drury Lane at the tender age of twelve, and two years later, in 1936, she joined the Sadler's Wells Ballet, creating the rôle of Pepé, that adorable canine ballerina in Ashton's *A Wedding Bouquet.* Originally it was thought that she had the makings of a great classical ballerina, but the fates decreed otherwise, and instead she became the first character dancer of the Royal Ballet, and an example to all her successors. Even so it is important to remember that her classical technique was always a strong one, and used with intelligent discretion. A little less than ten years ago she made a splendid impression as the ballerina in Balanchine's *Ballet Imperial,* which admirably showed a considerable versatility.

However, it is as a character and mime artist that she has perhaps made the deepest impression. Her performances in the Helpmann ballets will not easily be forgotten, she has done some good work for De Valois, and has so far proved irreplacable in Ashton's *Ondine.* Strangely enough the ballet in which she gave one of her finest performances, like the ill-fated *Cupid and Psyche,* which in 1939 was intended to give her her big chance, was one which did not remain long in the repertory. This was Andrée Howard's *A Mirror for Witches,* and she was superb in it. But she has been superb in so many rôles, for so many years. We refuse to believe that this is the end, so say: "Come back soon, we need you at Covent Garden."

JULY 1961 12th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 12 No. 7

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
Assistant Editor: E. C. Mason.
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

The True Worth

COMPANIES come and companies go and those that survive visit other countries and, if they are important enough, there is a lot of clamour at the time — after it is all over one is left to wonder what has been gained. The general public have some memories, interesting or otherwise, the impresarios are left to glow or glower about the takings and the critics have had opportunity to roar or rave. None of this is very lasting. The public forget what they have seen as soon as their attention can be attracted by another company, the impresarios lose all their takings on some other venture, and what the critics wrote has been used to wrap up the fish. The only true and lasting worth of all this visiting is how much anybody connected with ballet has learned and how what they have learned can be put towards the furthering and bettering of their art.

However much some people might have thought otherwise, there is not the slightest doubt that British ballet was immeasurably enriched by the visit of the Bolshoi Ballet a few years ago. Of course there were things to criticise, there always are and we expect there always will be, but what we learned about broadening our school of dance, about the lyrical sweep of performance, about lifts and about the general approach to rôles — all this has shaken-up our so-called English school more than many people would care to admit. Thank heaven that some people did learn because I think it extremely doubtful whether the Royal Ballet would be having what is generally reported as being a triumph in Russia now had it not been for the visit of the Bolshoi.

Now we are in the middle of a London season of another ballet company from Russia, this time from the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad, whose school is most closely connected with our own. Doubtless there will be still more for us to learn and it seems a pity that those most likely to profit from it are not here to see them. Let us hope though that those of us who do see them don't get carried away by inessentials — by costumes and décor, by the stories of new works or by public or critical reaction, favourable or otherwise — but concentrate hard on what this company has to offer. Let nobody dismiss anything they see as just "marvellous" or "ghastly" — an all too common tendency — but let them ponder on it all deeply and profit.

Of course it is possible that the Russians might also learn something from us, and although I am not quite certain what this could be, I am certain that they, like us, know where their own weaknesses lie.

Published by HANSOM BOOKS monthly on the 25th of the preceding month. By post: One year 27/-, Half-year 13/6, 2 years : 50/-, 3 years 81/-. A loose leaf binder (value 12/6) to hold 24 copies is presented free with every three-year subscription. (Foreign: pay in sterling or by International Money Order or through agents listed in this number.) Binders for purchase are 12/6 by post. Back numbers from April 1952 available (except May., Sept., 1952, Jan. ,to June, Aug., 1953, June, July, 1954, April, Aug., to Dec., 1955, June, Aug., to Dec., 1956, March, Nov., 1958, June 1959), price 2/3 each by post. 21 LOWER BELGRAVE STREET, LONDON, S.W.1. SLOane 0394. HANSOM BOOKS also publish every month MUSIC AND MUSICIANS, PLAYS AND PLAYERS, FILMS AND FILMING, BOOKS AND BOOKMEN, RECORDS AND RECORDING and SEVEN ARTS.

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PICTURE OF THE MONTH

Rudolf Nureyev

DURING the season of the Kirov Ballet in Paris, rumours started to drift across the channel. The company had a male dancer, Rudolf Nureyev, whose talent was quite exceptional. England, however, has been denied the privilege of seeing him dance with his company because at Le Bourget Airport, as the company was about to embark for London, he sought asylum in France. The reasons for this are confused owing to the differing reports generally put about. The only thing that seems certain is that Nureyev has been granted a permit by the French police to stay in France for three months and that he has joined the Marquis de Cuevas Ballet in Paris.

The picture above shows Nureyev in a double cabriole devant **from a variation in the last act of** The Sleeping Beauty.

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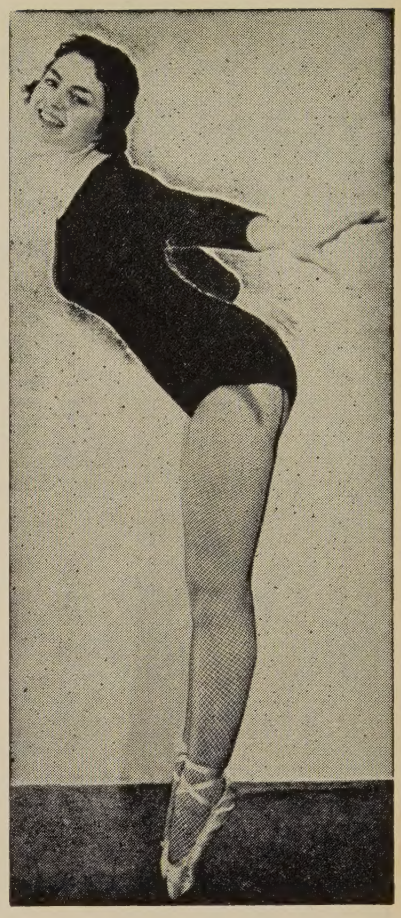

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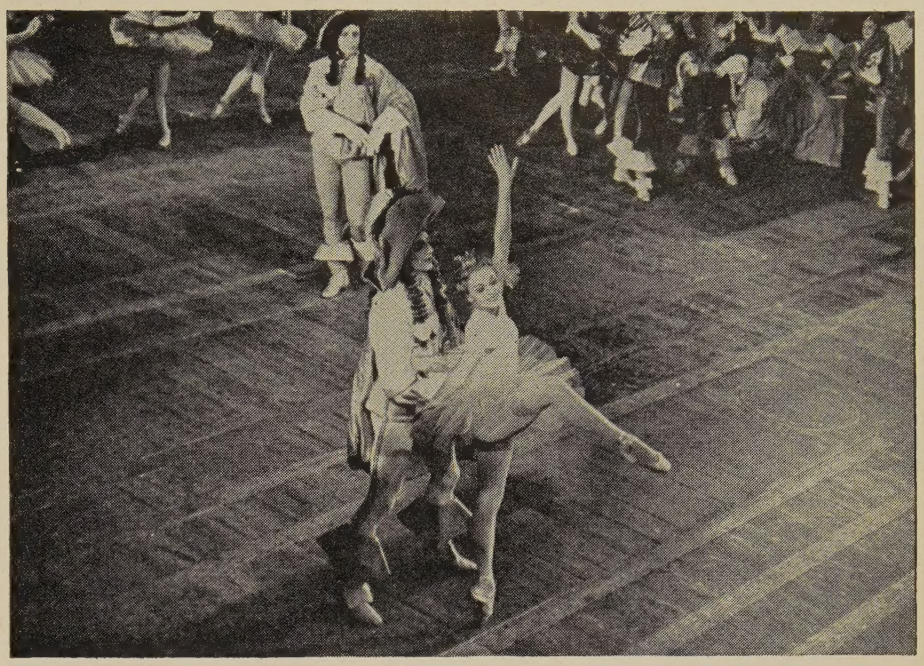
First Impressions from Paris

by **MARIE-FRANCOISE CHRISTOUT**

The Sleeping Beauty

Danced by the Kirov Company of Leningrad at the Paris Opéra on May 16. Produced after Marius Petipa with new choreography by Konstantin Sergeyev. Décors and costumes: Suliko Virsaladze.

WITH some emotion and in the presence of Ministers Malraux and Vinogradov, the Kirov company tackled the terrible audience known as "Tout Paris". Come to be seen, to meet each other, to pass the time or exchange a few inopportune words, such a public could not appreciate the qualities that make this something superb: namely, its perfect, profound and discreet mastery, and the great Russian style which it has inherited from the French but to which has been added all the brilliance and virtuosity characteristic of the 19th century Italian school. Furthermore, in the production nowhere was there a trace of that spirit of the circus which manages to please the supporters of certain private companies — De Cuevas is a case in point here.



ACT ONE IN PARIS: Irina Kolpakova, as Princess Aurora, in the first act of The Sleeping Beauty *when it was given on the opening night of the Kirov season at the Paris Opéra.* *Photo · Lido.*

From the outset, this version of *The Sleeping Beauty* proved a triumph for the dance and the dance alone. The décors appeared dusty and rather mediocre — the costumes are dreary and look as though they have been borrowed from the wardrobe of a provincial theatre at the turn of the century. While they do not deserve any attention, at least they leave the imagination free to wander over a work which could be transformed by a man of taste and genius such as Alexandre Benois. The eye itself, however, is content to follow the dance, and, of course, surrender to its enchantment.

The heir to the great tradition of the Maryinsky, this profoundly musical company retains the secret of the noble school. It pushes to perfection the *legato* Slav style which the Bolshoi Company had already shown to us in a remarkably developed form. The Leningrad Company possesses amazing attributes — its skill always appears effortless, its musicality is magical, especially in slow phrases, and difficulties are concealed in a way that would deceive even the most profane eye. Moreover, it has developed a weightless

ANOTHER AURORA: Stepanova, another ballerina of the Kirov Ballet who also dances the Aurora rôle in The Sleeping Beauty. *This picture shows her quite remarkable* jeté.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY : *Two soloists of the Kirov Ballet, now at Covent Garden, appearing to fly through the air in the last act* divertissement *from the Petipa/ Tchaikovsky ballet.*

SWAN LAKE *(below): Rudolf Nureyev, who sought asylum in France (see page 5), as Prince Siegfried in the third Act of* Swan Lake. *This dancer was awarded the Prix Nijinsky for 1961 by Serge Lifar, who declared that "Nureyev and Serge Golovine were the two finest male dancers in the world today".*

elevation, quite worthy of Taglioni or her rival, Istomina. And concerning dramatic action, the Russians' expressive sense is able to work miracles — always the plot is clear; never do the effects of detail become excessive.

At the head of a company in which it is really necessary to praise everyone, one must single out Irina Kolpakova as a graceful Princess Aurora. Before her light feet, her supple arms, her airborne jumps, the perils of the rôle simply fade away, and even the most hazardous balances lose that lack of firmness which the non-initiated ballerina so often stresses. Tall and modest, her partner, Vladilen Semenov, is endowed with noble bearing and elevation, while in the rôle of the Lilac Fairy, the ravishing Inna Zoubkovskaya made us appreciate the perfect elegance of her stage presence and her very captivating personality. The Bluebird *pas de deux* allowed us to applaud with equal vigour the exceptional gifts of Alla Sizova and Yuri Soloviev, notably the latter's magnificent *ballon.* Finally, Konstantin Shatilov gave a highly coloured interpretation of Carabosse.

To the traditional choreography of Petipa, Konstantin Sergeyev borrowed a number of modifications from here and there for his 1952 production. Alas, these are not always judiciously selected and he reveals himself as being a better *maître de ballet* than inspired choreographer. Conducted by Niazi, the Tchaikovsky score was used for all it was worth as an accompaniment to the dance. And in the Elysian Fields where he rests in the company of Perrault, Marius Petipa could possibly contemplate with enchantment this new triumph of his masterpiece danced by the company the same as the one he dedicated himself to — over a hundred years ago — for his life's career.

BRUHN AND SIMONE: Erik Bruhn and Kirsten Simone in two contrasting pas de deux *given during the 1961 Festival — left, in the* Don Quixote pas de deux; *right, in the bedroom scene from* Carmen.

Danish Festival with a French Accent

The emphasis on this year's Royal Danish Ballet Festival was more on the French ballets of Roland Petit than on native works.

by GENE PALATSKY

Photographed by MORGENS VON HAVEN

THE Royal Danish Ballet is blessed with such abundant gifts that all its admirers, foreign and local, have "accepted" (or pre-empted) the task of determining the company's future. Considering the Danish beauties — the highly-trained dramatic and technical abilities, vitality in movement, strong and balanced ensemble work, the world's most polished men dancers — it's understandable that the well-intentioned spectator would reason, "Here is a treasure chest that must be apportioned here, and not there". Repertoire is a heated issue now in this ballet capital.

An elite sect contends that the 19th-century Bournonville ballets have given the Royal Danes their unique quality, and should thus continue to dominate the repertoire. These observers were outraged that the festival schedule in May offered only *La Sylphide* and the last act of *Napoli*, with excerpts from *The Festival in Albano* and *The Floral Fête at Genzano* tossed on a quickly arranged Tivoli programme.

This visitor cannot join entirely with such a viewpoint.

It is satisfying to note that Bournonville's *The Kermesse in Bruges* and *Far from Denmark* will be mounted next season, with *A Folk Tale* scheduled for 1962-63. Harald Lander, the Danes' former ballet master, will return in the autumn to produce *Etudes* and two other ballets, and this is important — to increase the 20th century Danish ballets in the repertoire. A happy fill-in choice on the final festival programme was the "Joy of Living" dance from Hans Beck's *The Little Mermaid* (1909), a peasant jamboree in the Bournonville manner for ten dancers. Earlier, the Tivoli audience saw the regal Elsa Marianne von Rosen, well-travelled Swedish ballerina, float through the Mermaid's "Disappointment" scene. These performances marked the 100th birthday of Hans Beck, former Danish ballet chief, who died in 1952.

Most significant was the announced plan of ballet director Niels Bjorn Larsen for a workshop, to let young choreographers work out their ideas in private, with the best product being shown on the Royal Theatre New Stage next spring.

This is the sorest need — modern Danish choreography. At the May festival, for the first time, the musical portions dominated interest, mainly because of the contemporary Danish musical programmes. It was hard to remember that the Copenhagen festival was begun in 1950 to display only the ballet.

The Bournonville heritage will be maintained in the Royal Theatre classrooms. His ballets should remain in the repertoire, three or four of them rotated each year. The subscription audiences would not tolerate repeated Bournonville evenings. And the dancers need the wide technical range to perform international programmes, for this is an internationally acclaimed company and the ballet world is looking for the "Danish approach" to the standard works. No one is asking the Vienna Philharmonic to play only Mozart, Strauss and Berg.

Yet, the Danes stirred such controversy at the festival, by dancing an ill-conceived, unrewarding assortment of ballets. They had some excuse because touring killed half their home season — but not that much of an excuse.

In addition to the Bournonville and Beck works, they seemed at their peak in the modern Swedish ballets of Birgit Cullberg. (They will produce her *Lady from the Sea* next season.)

Unforgiveably, they also gave stunning performances of two Roland Petit ballets new to Denmark, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, which London justifiably disliked in 1959, and *La Chaloupée*, choreographed especially for the company. The Danes don't need these ballets. They do need Frederick Ashton's *Romeo and Juliet*, George Balanchine's *Apollo* and *Serenade*, and Jerome Robbins' *Fanfare* — and these great works suffered callous treatment.

Cyrano is choreographically weak, relying on banal dramatic gestures and sensational group scenes, and particularly on the dancers, who are expected to transform the lot into valid dance theatre. The Danes almost accomplish this. Although Cyrano's poetic art is expressed choreographically with mere hand-waving from the mouth, Henning Kronstam managed to convey a miraculous blend of heroism, comedy, arrogance and agony as the Grenadier. The moment he first hesitated . . . and then surrendered to the frustration of ghost-

BOURNONVILLE AND HIS PUPIL: Left, Elsa Marianne Von Rosen in Hans Beck's The Little Mermaid, *a scene from which she gave at a special performance in the Tivoli to mark the choreographer's 100th birthday (he died in 1952). Beck was a pupil of Bournonville, whose famous* Napoli *is seen in the picture on right with Fredbjorn Bjornsson and Kirsten Ralov in the last act* divertissement.

writing the love letters, was moving drama. Kirsten Simone was a resolute, exquisite Roxane. Among the irrelevant *divertissements* at Ragueneau's Inn, the young Marianne Walther and four little cook's boys (ballet pupils) provided an endearing parody of the Rose Adagio. As for the gallant, airborne Musketeers, Gascoyne never had it so good.

Even the genius of Erik Bruhn, the charm of Miss Walther and the expert vaudeville of the Parisian street gang couldn't save *La Chaloupée,* an unashamed dud. The farcical *Carmen* is produced so brilliantly in Copenhagen that it probably deserves a place in the repertoire — at least when Erik Bruhn is around as Don José. Aside from the marvellous bandit trio of Inge Sand, Fredbjorn Bjornsson and Niels Kehlet, each gypsy dancer created an individualized and appropriate character. Salute them all — Marianne Walther, Viveka Segerskog, Arlette Weinreich and Karin Vikelgaard. Kirsten Simone was an unconvincing, unseductive Carmen. And her pretty figure was distorted by the too revealing, hippy costume. Black stockings, instead of white, would slim down her thighs and add to the allure.

But these ballets are hijinks in a repertoire. Bournonville has written: "Dancing above all should be careful not to flatter a sophisticated public's love of sensation, which is foreign to true art. . . . Gaiety is true strength; excess is weakness." Let the company honour this Bournonville legacy.

True art took a beating at the festival. Ashton should be invited to Copenhagen to restudy and overhaul *Romeo and Juliet.* For one thing he might extend the young lovers' first meeting, which is too quickly interrupted now by a dance for Paris and the men. He might revise the scenes with the priest. Most important, he might instruct this company in the use of dance technique as dramatic expression — as if

CYRANO DE BERGERAC: *Left, Henning Kronstam in the title rôle with Kirsten Simone as Roxane. Right, Niels Kehlet, Jan Madsen, Henning Kronstam and Eske Holm as Musketeers in a rousing scene from Roland Petit's ballet.*

that were necessary in Copenhagen. But, strangely, this was the chief failing. The first time the Capulet and Montague men circled each other in the street, it looked like an abstract ballet pattern, instead of enemies breathing fire. Neither Mercutio or Tybalt were shaped distinctively, and their fatal duel came almost as a surprise. Yet this is the ballet's climax. Five years ago, Stanley Williams and Fredbjorn Bjornsson blazed in these parts. Kronstam and Mona Vangsaa were subtle and tender in the title rôles, finding perfect harmony in the balcony scene and the bedroom *pas de deux* before Romeo's flight. Ashton's ballet was once a superior work of art to the Bolshoi *Romeo and Juliet,* for instance, using pure dance steps more effectively than the Russians' dramatic excess to weave this tragic tale. The wonderful Prokofiev score underlines all the drama and demands visible conflict on stage. But there is little poetry or tension left now in the Copenhagen *Romeo.*

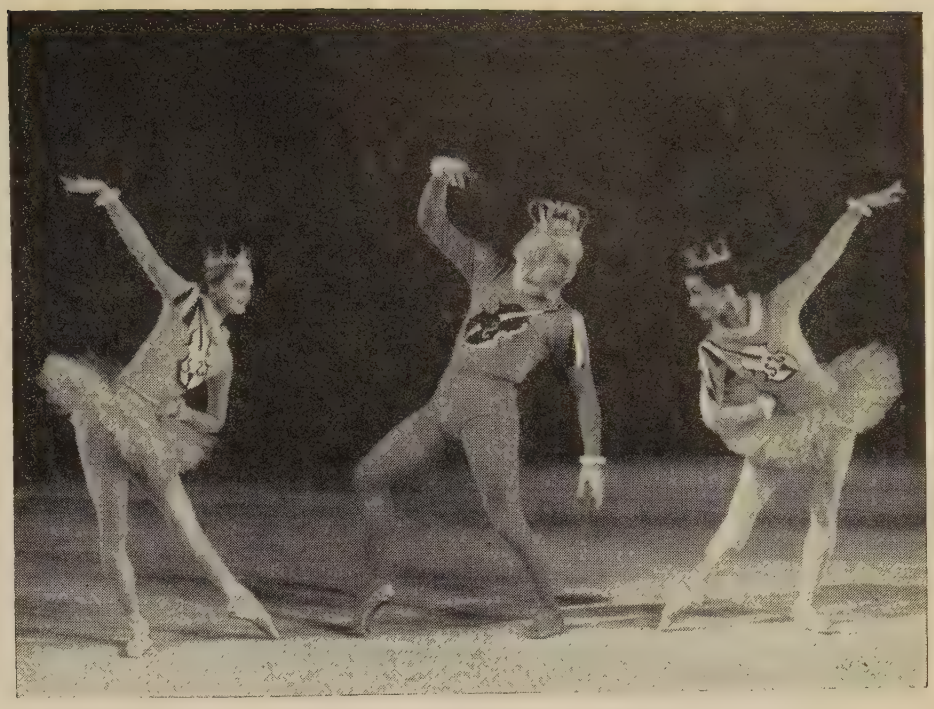
It's a pity the Danes dropped *Night Shadow* from the repertoire, for this was the one Balanchine work in which they surpassed the New York City Ballet, clarifying the symbolism which escapes the New Yorkers. For some reason they retained *Apollo* and *Serenade,* and have destroyed the classical dignity and purely musical imagery of these masterpieces. *Apollo* is now a game for pretty children. *Serenade* is belaboured with vague dramatics. Robbins' *Fanfare,* too, has lost the direct musicality, the unornamented phrasing of the original choreography, which now suffers from cuteness. However, Elin Bauer and Ole Fatum danced neatly and melodically in the Viola duet of *Fanfare,* and Mona Kiil was a fluid, vibrant Harp.

These orchestral choreographers call for a clean, open style which must leave all histrionics and embellishments to the structure of the dance phrase and to the music. Balanchine and Robbins ballets could bolster any repertoire — if authentically preserved. Kenneth MacMillan, reportedly, has been invited to stage an evening of ballets in Copenhagen next season and, though this is good news for him and the company, his works face the same danger.

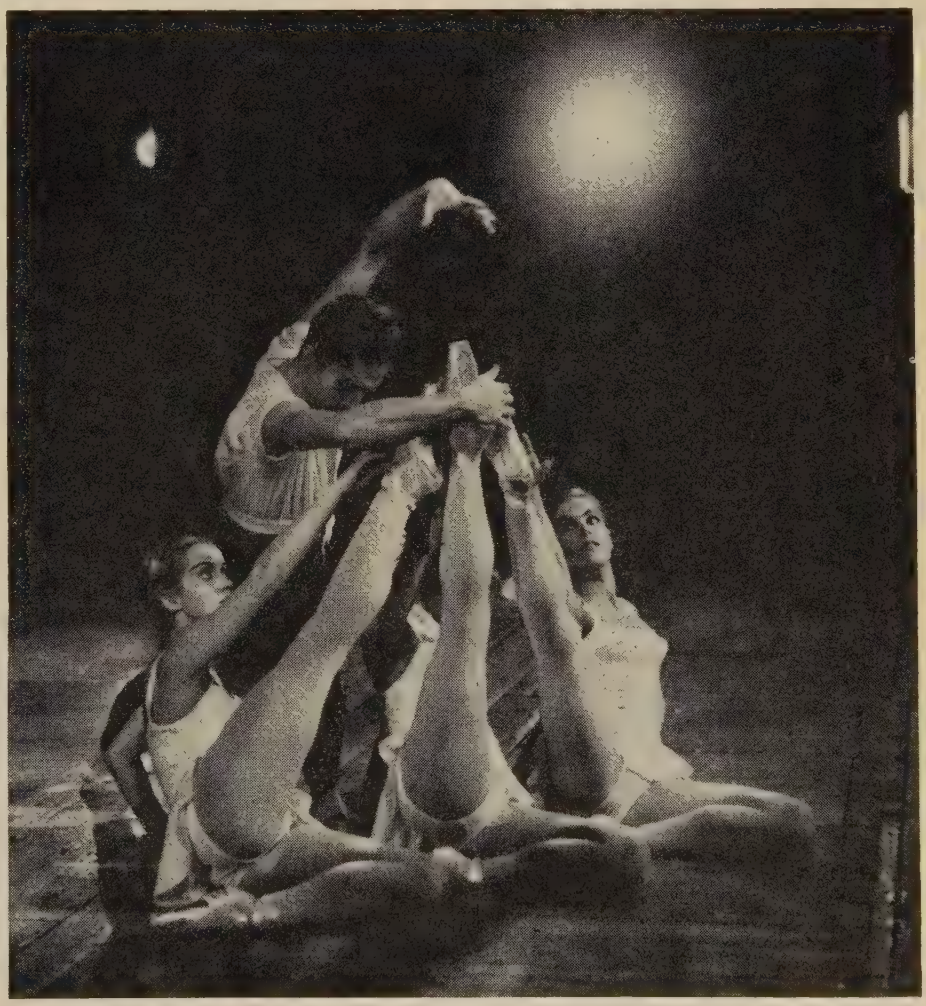
Naturally, the Danes paid loving care to their own new ballets. In Lizzie Rode's *Ballet in D,* the young choreographer and dancer (an excellent mime) showed creative talent which deserves another chance. She tried musical visualisation of a "landscape" score by her husband, Ole Schmidt, inventing attractive patterns, but with overly simple, unrelated movements. Two dozen dancers, the girls in short tunics, the men in tights, frolicked deftly through her steps — especially Ruth Andersen, Mette Mollerup, Niels Kehlet and Jorn Madsen. (The last two were promoted to "solodancers", the company's highest rank, during the festival.) The ballet was confused by an unexplainable fishing coast scene on the backdrop.

Less promising was *The Shadow,* Birger Bartholin's pseudo-romantic staging of H. C. Andersen's morbid tale. The interpretation was so literal that the spectator was forced to know the story by heart — and even that effort would be wasted. The Andersen story could make a ballet, for there is a poetic line of thought — man sacrificing his good nature through use of an evil *alter ego* to find love and beauty in life. Any such thread was invisible in Bartholin's cluttered *mise en scene.* In the Stravinsky-Auden *The Rake's Progress* in

Continued on page 33



TRANSATLANTIC REVIVALS: Above, Svend Erik Jensen as a Contrabass with two violins in a scene from Jerome Robbins' Fanfare. *Below, Henning Kronstam with Kirsten Simone, Mette Mollerup and Marianne Walther in Balanchine's* Apollon Musagète. *Both ballets have been in the Royal Danish repertory for some years.*



THE UNSINKABLE MOLLY BROWN *(above): Dancers in the number "Up Where the People Are", choreographed by Peter Gennaro.*

THE HAPPIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD *(below): Cyril Ritchard, who has directed and plays in this musical based on* Lysistrata.

Photos: Friedman-Abeles.

A Quintet of Broadway Musicals

The musical is more an indigenous part of the theatre season in New York than it is in any other city in the world. During the 1960-61 season, twelve new musicals were presented in Broadway — seven have already been reported in previous issues. Here are the remaining five.

by ARTHUR TODD

DURING the 1960-61 season, twelve musicals were presented on Broadway (seven have been reported in our previous issues) and five remain that are worthy of report. Two of the earlier musicals are *The Unsinkable Molly Brown,* with choreography by Peter Gennaro; *Do Re Mi,* with dances and musical numbers by Marc Breaux and Deedee Wood. Just recently, we have had *The Happiest Girl in the World,* with dances by Dania Krupska, who also devised *Points on Jazz* for American Ballet Treatre, as well as two of her musicals, *Donnybrook,* choreographed and directed by Jack Cole, and *Carnival,* directed and choreographed by the brilliantly imaginative Gower Champion, whose *Bye Bye Birdie* is now in England.

The Unsinkable Molly Brown, which stars the enchanting, gravel-voiced Tammy Grimes, a discovery of Noël Coward's, is a turn-of-the-century musical that offers a wide opportunity for a series of settings that range from the Colorado countryside, Denver, Paris, the Titanic and back again to the far west. Oliver Smith has designed his best settings of the year for this (not nearly as over-elaborate as for *Camelot)* and Miles White has provided some noteworthy costumes. Peter Gennaro's choreography has a similar range and change of style. Very Western indeed is the knockabout dance, "Belly up to the Bar, Boys," a number for some of the miners and their girl friends. Another number, "Up Where the People Are," is a delightful version of some of the pre-World War I dances of Vernon and Irene Castle. Less formal, but equally charming in concept, is Peter Gennaro's Act 1 finale scene in which he had Tammy Grimes kick off her dancing slippers and go whirling and waltzing around a ballroom, skimming around the stage bare-footed.

Do Re Mi, starring Phil Silvers and Nancy Walker, is a loud and brassy Broadway show, much in the genre of *Guys and Dolls,* that is full of zip and zest. Since it deals with the juke box industry, most of its scenes seem to take place in all kinds of night clubs, from the luxurious to the shabby, and its chief dances are, in consequence, a variety of night club routines that may well seem slightly reminiscent to those who recall *Pal Joey* and the aforementioned *Guys and Dolls.* These dances have been choreographed competently and amusingly by Marc Breaux and Deedee Wood, formerly assistants to Michael Kidd with *Destry Rides Again.* Two of their outstanding numbers are a youthful "Juke Box Hop" and a gangster scene in "The Juke Box Trouble". The presence of Stuart Hodes, former soloist with Martha Graham, in the ensemble, makes one wish that the choreographers had provided more for this distinguished dancer to do.

The Happiest Girl in the World, starring and directed by Cyril Ritchard, is an opulent new production of that rather threadbare plot of *Lysistrata.* (We did have a rather enchanting production of it in 1942, though, called *By Jupiter,* starring Ray Bolger, and with a noteworthy score by Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart.) This current production uses a collection of Jacques Offenbach's melodies, with so

DONNYBROOK *(above): Male dancers in the musical based on the John Huston film,* The Quiet Man, *which has been directed and choreographed by Jack Cole. Second from left is William Guske, formerly of American Ballet Theatre, who proved to be the outstanding dancer in the show.* *Photo: Fred Fehl.*

many of them borrowed from Massine's *Gaité Parisienne,* that one almost expects Alexandra Danilova, Frederic Franklin, Igor Youskevitch and Massine himself to come floating across the stage again.

There is one fresh and inventive dance in this musical. It is an all-male ballet, "The Olympics," which is the opening number, and in which the men perform an hilarious satire on Olympic games and sports such as discus throwers, hurdlers, torch-bearers and like athletic diversions. From here onwards, Krupska's dances seemed to go downhill, seeming over-long, tedious and derivative. Other assets, however, are the stylised over-playing of Cyril Ritchard as well as the colourful settings and lighting by William and Jean Eckart and Robert Fletcher's revealing costumes.

The long-awaited *Donnybrook,* choreographed and directed by Jack Cole, is based on the John Huston film *The Quiet Man,* which provided a magnificent view of a green and glowing Ireland. Unfortunately, in its transposition to the stage, it has become nothing more than a stock musical comedy full of Irish clichés. Aside from the danced overture, a stunning idea, that discloses a line of kilted men and another of girls in country garb, the rest of the dances seem a repetition of this beautiful beginning. Norman Maen, who was brought over from Ireland as assistant to Jack Cole, is programmed as Principal Dancer. However, it is the stalwart William Guske, formerly of American Ballet Theatre, who dances off with the honours of this musical. He alone of the male dancers seems to have the spit-and-polish, elegance and arrogance, plus a meticulous style that makes him stand out from the rest of the dancers. One wishes that somewhere else in this production Cole had recreated one of the exciting Celtic folk dances, where the dancers carry sticks, as well as some other dances that have a more Gaelic feeling. However, I must add that I have nothing but praise for designer Rouben Ter-Arutunian's back-drops and scrim curtains that brimmed over with the lush green of Ireland. Similarly, Klaus Holm (son of choreographer Hanya Holm) lit this production beautifully.

Carnival, the new Broadway musical based on the film version of *Lili,* is choreographed and directed by Gower Champion and, from every point of view, it outshines every musical of the season. Quite apparently, Champion is as gifted a stage director as he is a choreographer, and the result is a glittering piece of theatre magic. Deservedly, the New York Drama Critics' Circle have named this the best musical

CARNIVAL *(below): James Mitchell, in white pants, dances to Anna Maria Albergheti in the "Sword, Rose and Cape" number from the musical based on the film* Lili, *and which Gower Champion has choreographed and directed.* *Photo: Friedman-Abeles.*

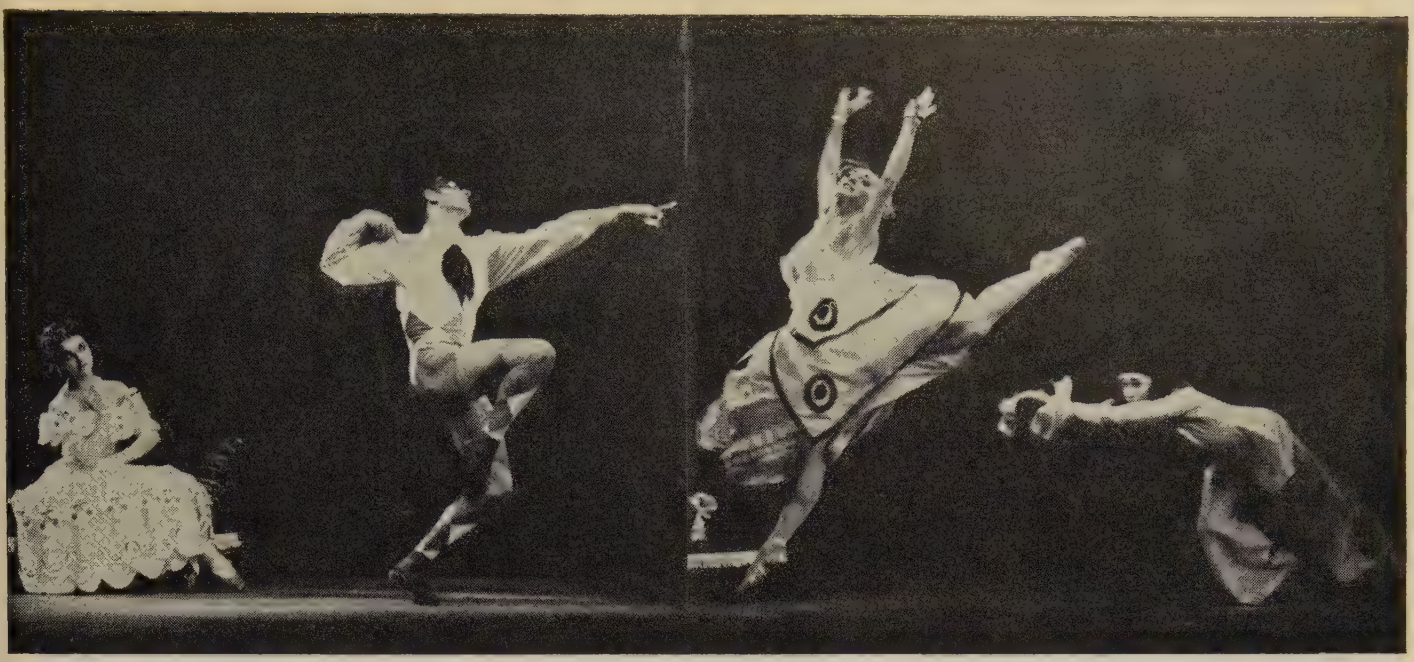
CARNIVAL: *Two more pictures from the musical, directed by Gower Champion, which was named by the New York Drama Critics' Circle as being the best musical of the season. Above, Pierre Olaf (recently in* La Plume de ma Tante), *Jennifer Billingsly, Ivy March and Christine Bartel in the "Grand Imperial Cirque de Paris" number. Below, a scene from the "Carnival Ballet" which uses flame-eaters, acrobats and performing animals as well as dancers. Photos: Friedman-Abeles.*

of the season. What's more, there is an inspired performance by Pierre Olaf, recently of *La Plume de Ma Tante,* and the settings and lighting by Will Armstrong Jones and the costumes by Freddy Wittop all contrive, as do the music and lyrics by Bob Merrill, to capture the essence of a touring carnival.

Almost everyone, by now, must be aware of this plot which is about a homeless waif of a girl who joins a carnival and whose love is torn between a puppeteer and a magician. From beginning to end, this musical comedy is completely choreographed though there are not too many dance numbers. The opening scene, which is pure theatre enchantment, starts with the curtain up on a bare stage. Slowly, a caravan of carnival people arrive, singly and in twos and threes, and set up their encampment in front of the audience. Although this scene may remind some of Roland Petit's haunting ballet, *Les Forains,* it has an individuality and style all its own and serves as a prologue, as it were, just as did Agnes de Mille's "Carousel Waltz" in *Carousel,* to establish the scene, atmosphere and character of these rather shoddy, second-rate performers.

Of course, there are also other numbers that are quite the opposite. One is the gay and gaudy "Carnival Ballet", with its flame eaters, acrobats, trained dog act, trick bear and other performers set off by waving banners, glitter and tinsel. Too, there is the show-stopping dance number, the best of this season, in which Pierre Olaf and the dancers sing and cavort about the happy days of "Grande Imperial Cirque de Paris". There is a lively number in which James Mitchell has a duel with four roustabouts that is called "Sword, Rose and Cape". Again, there is an hilarious spoof on magicians which finds James Mitchell singing "It's Always You" to Kay Ballard, all the while plunging swords through a box that encases her.

After a generally disappointing and mediocre season of Broadway song and dance shows, it's most pleasurable to welcome Gower Champion's *Carnival* as the most distinguished contribution to the Broadway musical theatre this year.



KARSAVINA REVIVES FOKINE: Tamara Karsavina reproduced Fokine's Carnaval *for Western Theatre Ballet. Here are Clover Roope as Columbine, Max Natiez as Harlequin, Brenda Last as Papillon and Laverne Meyer as Pierrot.*

New Balance for the West

Western Theatre Ballet adds a production of Fokine's Carnaval, **revived by Tamara Karsavina, to its repertory of mainly contemporary ballets.**

by CLIVE BARNES

Photographed by ROY ROUND

AGAINST all the rules of probability, and against quite a few of those even of possibility, Western Theatre Ballet is now in the fifth year of its existence, and artistically it is prospering. Few of its ballets are masterpieces, while some are still not worthy of the repertory, and its dancers sometimes lack something in finesse and polish. Yet the company continues to improve. Working in unbelievably difficult circumstances, often on scratch stages and with the small company continually pushed to its utmost limit, Western Theatre Ballet has learnt to adapt itself to its difficulties, and come what may, to maintain its standards of dancing. Its continuance is a triumph for its director, Elizabeth West, its principal choreographer, Peter Darrell, its ballet-master, Erling Sunde, and its small but devoted back-stage and administrative staff. The company's morale seems to be extraordinarily high, and they cheerfully undertake, for very little financial reward, an amount of work that would strike cold panic into the hearts of their perhaps more fortunately placed colleagues in other companies, all of whom seem feather-bedded by comparison. They display a quality, call it guts, dedication or what you will, that is nowadays almost unknown in British ballet, although during this country's pioneering days it must have been a great deal more common. The curious thing is I always get the impression that these hard-pressed dancers get more satisfaction and even enjoyment out of their work than the glossy "organisation men" of other companies. Western Theatre Ballet is not just a job, it's a way of life.

Like most critics, I instinctively love the poor and the struggling, and the realisation of this partiality has made me, hair-shirted to the last, regard their efforts with a consciously controlled coldness that sometimes borders on the harsh. I am willing to make certain concessions to a company like Western Theatre Ballet in recognition of the circumstances under which it works, but those few concessions allowed I try to criticise it against the same standards I would apply to the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden.

In the past I have always felt that its overall artistic policy smacked too much of expediency. De Valois and, in a quite different way, Rambert built up their companies by following a conscious plan — long-range in the case of De Valois, and rather more flexible in the case of Rambert. Western Theatre Ballet is now overcoming most of its teething troubles, but, perhaps understandably, Elizabeth West is so taken up with the cruel need of keeping going, that there seems to be far less long-range planning. The question of whether this is to be an *avant-garde* shoe-string company, a tiny national ballet for the theatreless towns of the British provinces, or a regional ballet for the West Country, still does not seem to be perfectly resolved. Physically the company has found a place for itself in the British ballet scene, but artistically it still seems uncertain just what it wants to do with it.

For all this, its achievements have been remarkable. Its programmes are nowadays for the most part well-balanced, and, incidentally, give the newcomer an excellent introduction to the range of ballet as an art. The company is more alive to experiment, or to be fairer has more opportunity for experiment, than any of the other more expensively established British companies, and finally it has acquired in its company style a particular degree of theatricality and dramatic exuberance that, Ballet Rambert apart, is rare in British ballet. That some of its virtues are the outcome of its limitations is all to the good, and it will be a sad day for British ballet if this gallant enterprise ever has to strike its standards.

The company's peregrinations give Londoners few readily accessible chances to see it, but a recent week's season starting May 22 at the small repertory theatre in Guildford provided such an opportunity, and I was rather surprised how few members of the London ballet audience availed themselves of it. The week's season, which included all three of the company's recent new productions, showed two programmes. The first programme consisted of Walter Gore's *Street Games,* Darrell's *Non-Stop,* Darrell's *Ode,* Meriel Evans's *Love Duet,* and Darrell's *Bal de la Victoire.* The second programme was Madame Karsavina's new production of Fokine's *Carnaval,* Darrell's *Chiaroscuro,* Maurice Béjart's *Sonate à Trois* and Ray Powell's *One in Five.*

NEW BALLETS

Street Games

First given by the New-Ballet Company on November 11, 1952. Choreography by Walter Gore. Music by Jacques Ibert. Décor and Costumes (for Western Theatre Ballet) by Phyllida Law.

Cast

Hopscotch: BRENDA LAST, HAZEL MERRY, CLOVER ROOPE, YVONNE JOSEPH.

Rugger: MAX NATIEZ, OLIVER SYMONS.

Skipping: LAST, MERRY, ROOPE, JOSEPH.

Mooning: PETER CAZALET, GAIL DONALDSON.

THE COURSE OF LOVE: Left, Erling Sunde as the lovelorn and poetic Eusebius. Right, Oliver Symons as Pantalon is frustrated in his desire for Columbine (Roope) by her lover Harlequin (Natiez).

Writing on the Wall: LAST with ROOPE, MERRY, SYMONS.
Lost Ball: MERRY.
Tag: ROOPE, LAST, MERRY, JOSEPH
Statues: LAST, MERRY, ROOPE, JOSEPH.
Duel: NATIEZ, SYMONS.
Dressing-Up: LAST, MERRY, JOSEPH.
Bouquet and Finale: ENSEMBLE.

IT seems strange that although *Street Games* was first produced less than ten years ago, it now looks somewhat dated — more like a ballet of the 'thirties than the 'fifties. It has the virtue of simplicity, yet equally there is a coyness about the ballet which is irritating. It is Gore at his most whimsical, and although parts of the ballet still exert considerable charm, it now seems over-long and badly constructed.

Many of the dances are adaptations of children's games — notably hop-scotch, skipping and tag. The skipping episode is unusually inventive and together with the much simpler dance called "Dressing Up", is probably the best thing in the ballet.

The Ibert music, taken largely from his *Petite Suite* and *Histoires,* is cutely sophisticated, but the new décor and costumes by Phyllida Law are deplorable. Apparently the complete décor was not on view, but even this partial glimpse was enough to show that it is beyond redemption. The costumes for the girls, looking like shortie nightdresses tied up in the middle, were — to say the least — unflattering.

The performance given by Western Theatre Ballet is not, I think, as lively as that produced by both the New-Ballet Company, for whom *Street Games* was created, or the Walter Gore Ballet, who later revived it. The urchin, Bisto-kid humours have become rather heavy-handed, and the youthful screen-struck lovers have now become more silly than charming.

Brenda Last, however, is brilliant in the skipping scene and as the girl who writes: "Mary loves Bill" on the wall. Hazel Merry is also notably successful as the girl playing with the lost ball, and I liked the grave, child-like impassivity of Yvonne Joseph in the "Dressing-Up" episode.

Ode

Choreography by Peter Darrell. Music by Igor Stravinsky. Décor and Costumes by Pauline Whitehouse.

Cast
SYLVIA WELLMAN, GAIL DONALDSON, YVONNE JOSEPH, CLOVER ROOPE, BRENDA LAST, MAX NATIEZ, OLIVER SYMONS.

BALLETS are more often too long than too short. Even so a ballet lasting only twelve minutes, particularly one broken into three scenes, is too brief by any reckoning. The music was written in 1943, and Stravinsky calls it a "triptych for orchestra, dedicated to the memory of Natalia Kussevitsky". Its three parts are named "Eulogy", "Eclogue" and "Epitaph". The score was composed at around the same time as *Danses Concertantes* and *Scènes de Ballet,* although as fits its elegiac purpose, it lacks the flashes of wit found the two ballet scores.

Although the ballet has no clearly specified theme as such, Darrell has taken the contrast between the music of Stravinsky's middle movement, and the quieter, more resigned music of the first and third, to suggest an allegory of the spiritual and worldly lives. The theme is implicit rather than clearly stated, and possibly the work can equally well be regarded as a plotless ballet. The first movement shows four girls, perhaps nuns, but in fact any group of people in a tightly-knit, ascetic community. The second movement, which takes the form of a *pas de trois* for two boys and a girl, can be taken as representing a freer, less restricted way of life. In the last movement we are back once more with the puritan amazons, and at the end of the ballet one of these four girls, who has shown signs of restlessness with her cloistered existence throughout, decides to leave. The whole theme could be summed up by adapting Hamlet's exhortation to Ophelia as: "Get thee from a nunnery!"

Darrell's problem here is to establish not atmosphere but mood, and the structure, nature and length of the score gives him very little opportunity to do so. The close formality of the cloistered world, neatly suggested by the chastity of the classical movements and the prevalence of *ports de bras* in which the hands are linked together, has scarcely been established before it is destroyed by the eruption of the bouncy, but not really very interesting, *pas de trois* of the human rat-race.

Partly because of the nebulousness of the theme, and partly because of the slightness of the work as a whole, the ballet frustratingly leaves very little impression. It is like the first statement of an idea that might very well have been amplified. With so much of the company's repertory falling under the general heading of *divertissements,* it seems a pity that Darrell did not take the opportunity of providing an extended passage of choreography, which the programme so obviously required.

Pauline Whitehouse's setting consists of nothing more than a cyclorama with six screens (only four of which were on view in Guildford), yet its impersonal anonymity was on the right lines for this style of ballet. Her costumes, little more than mildly fanciful variations on the eternal practice dress, were badly cut and spoilt the line of the virginal *pas de quatre.*

At first sight Darrell's choreography did

not look particularly demanding, and on the whole it was cleanly performed by the cast. I particularly liked Brenda Last as the *fille de joie* of the middle movement. Sylvia Wellman, as the non-conformist member of the religious *pas de quatre*, was probably as effective as the scope of the ballet allowed. The difficulty is that her emotional predicament is not sufficiently integrated into the choreography and she is left to mark it almost purely by facial expression. As a result she tends to look bad-tempered or ill-at-ease when she should be looking poignant.

Carnaval

Produced in this version by the Diaghilev Ballets Russes on May 20, 1910. Choreography by Michel Fokine, re-produced for Western Theatre Ballet by Tamara Karsavina, assisted by Elizabeth Schooling. Music by Schumann. Costumes after Léon Bakst.

Cast

Pierrot : LAVERNE MEYER
Harlequin : MAX NATIEZ.
Valse Noble : GAIL DONALDSON, YVONNE JOSEPH, PETER CAZALET, BRIAN WILLIS.
Estrella : SYLVIA WELLMAN.
Florestan : DENNIS GRIFFITH.
Eusebius : ERLING SUNDE.
Chiarina : HAZEL MERRY.
Papillon : BRENDA LAST.
Columbine : CLOVER ROOPE.
Pantalon : OLIVER SYMONS.

IT is both puzzling and understandable that *Carnaval* has never found a really permanent place in the British repertory. As a ballet it is superb, yet its very qualities make it astonishingly fragile. Its style is elusive, yet at the same time lapses in taste — often not noticed by the general public in a ballet such as *Les Sylphides* — are somehow glaringly obvious, and its sensitive beauties are reduced to chocolate-box vapidity.

Even so, it is undoubtedly a very sensible choice for Western Theatre Ballet, giving them one of the great ballet classics which is not currently danced by any other company (it has not been seen in England for over six years) and a work peculiarly well fitted to the size and nature of the company. Although the numbers have to be somewhat reduced, and the Philistines have been completely omitted (surely making this the first ballet company ever to triumph so completely over Philistinism) it is not a ballet that calls for a large female *corps*, and is consequently well within the capacity of a "soloists only" company.

Having thus decided to take their first plunge with the classics, the company proceeded very wisely. They borrowed the original Bakst costume designs from Cyril Beaumont, they got Elizabeth Schooling to help with the mounting of the ballet, and finally, best of all, they invited Tamara Karsavina to provide the production with so many of those touches which nowadays are either forgotten or neglected.

Karsavina was Fokine's own choice as Columbine, and her memories of the original production over fifty years ago, are extraordinarily valuable, giving the Western Theatre Ballet's new version innumerable minutiae that have the quite unmistakable air of authenticity. Particularly in the central scenes between Columbine, Harlequin, Pantalon and Pierrot, tiny incidents and fragments of characterisation emerge with all the fresh clarity of a cleaned masterpiece. Where, to be honest, the production is far less successful is in its general overall shape. It is curious to see that, reversing the usual trend, the details of acting and gesture and certain isolated passages of choreography, are better produced than the *ensemble* work and the choreography as a whole. Furthermore, it is not, I suggest, being completely fanciful to imagine that those passages where Columbine is on stage have been realised with greater understanding than those where she is absent from the scene — a natural result I suppose of Karsavina being more aware of Columbine's rôle than the rest of the ballet.

Bakst's costumes have been very well revived, even if the top hats are at present too shiny, and some of the materials used are not quite expensive enough to make their fullest effect. For all this it is wonderful to see, for example, Pierrot wearing his correct black ruff and the green pom-poms on his blouse and hat. Having now got so used to black pom-poms, the green at first seems faintly improbable, like a waiter in a yellow tail coat. Yet once the first shock has been absorbed, one realises that Bakst was clearly right, for the costume no longer makes the sad-faced clown look like a pier-end pierrot. (One thing, however, did worry me about Pierrot. His white make-up, was not taken beyond the line of the jaw, leaving his neck looking almost indecently naked — I do not ever recall seeing this in photographs of Bolm in the rôle, but possibly this too is traditional.)

The care that has been lavished on these costumes made it all the sadder that the company so far has not been able to produce Bakst's all-important setting, with its two Biedermeier sofas and gold-tulip frieze. This box set, with its mid-stage entrance is essential for parts of the choreography (Pierrot's entrance, for example) and black curtains and a single sofa, wrong and solitary, provide no substitute.

The dancing varied between the good and the merely well-intentioned. For my money, the one outstanding member of

HAPPY ENDING — BUT NOT FOR ALL : Columbine (Roope) and Harlequin (Natiez) are finally united though Pierrot (Meyer) has to be content with kissing Columbine's hand. A final moment in Western Theatre Ballet's revival of Fokine's Carnaval.

NUMERALS ABOUNDING: Hazel Merry, Erling Sunde and Sylvia Wellman in Maurice Béjart's Sonate à Trois *based on the Jean-Paul Sartre play* Huis Clos. *Below, Hazel Merry with Max Natiez, Oliver Symons, Dennis Griffith and Peter Cazalet in Ray Powell's very successful work, originally created for Sunday Ballet Club,* One in Five.

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the cast was Max Natiez as Harlequin, and in fact I cannot think of anyone in British ballet, with only the possible exceptions of Gilpin and Usher, who could dance it better. Mercurial and heartless, this Harlequin had a hard streak of animal coarseness in him, a viciousness that gives a cutting edge to the pranks he plays on Pantalon and Pierrot. Natiez made a bold attempt to end his famous variation in the authorised fashion by sinking down from his *pirouette à la seconde* straight into the cross-legged squat. At the performance I saw this did not quite come off, but the rest of his dancing made a wholly creditable shot at an extraordinarily difficult part.

Brenda Last's Papillon was also excellently danced and she negotiated the choreography's technical hazards with distinction, and the musical pitfalls at least with assurance. Laverne Meyer's self-pitying Pierrot, with his mouth twisted into a dark snarl of lipstick is now quite good, and may one day be a lot better. He needs to project more emotion with his body, and leave less to his face. Oliver Symons as Pantalon is along the right lines, although a shade too ready to slip into conventional caricature, while Erling Sunde and Dennis Griffith have started moderately well as Eusebius and Florestan respectively.

Neither Hazel Merry as Chiarina nor Clover Roope in the most tricky rôle of all, Columbine, proved completely satisfactory. In both cases it was partly a lack of neatness around the feet, and a slightly heavy-handed approach to the choreography. However, Roope's performance was intelligent and carefully studied, and her characterisation fitted in well with the production.

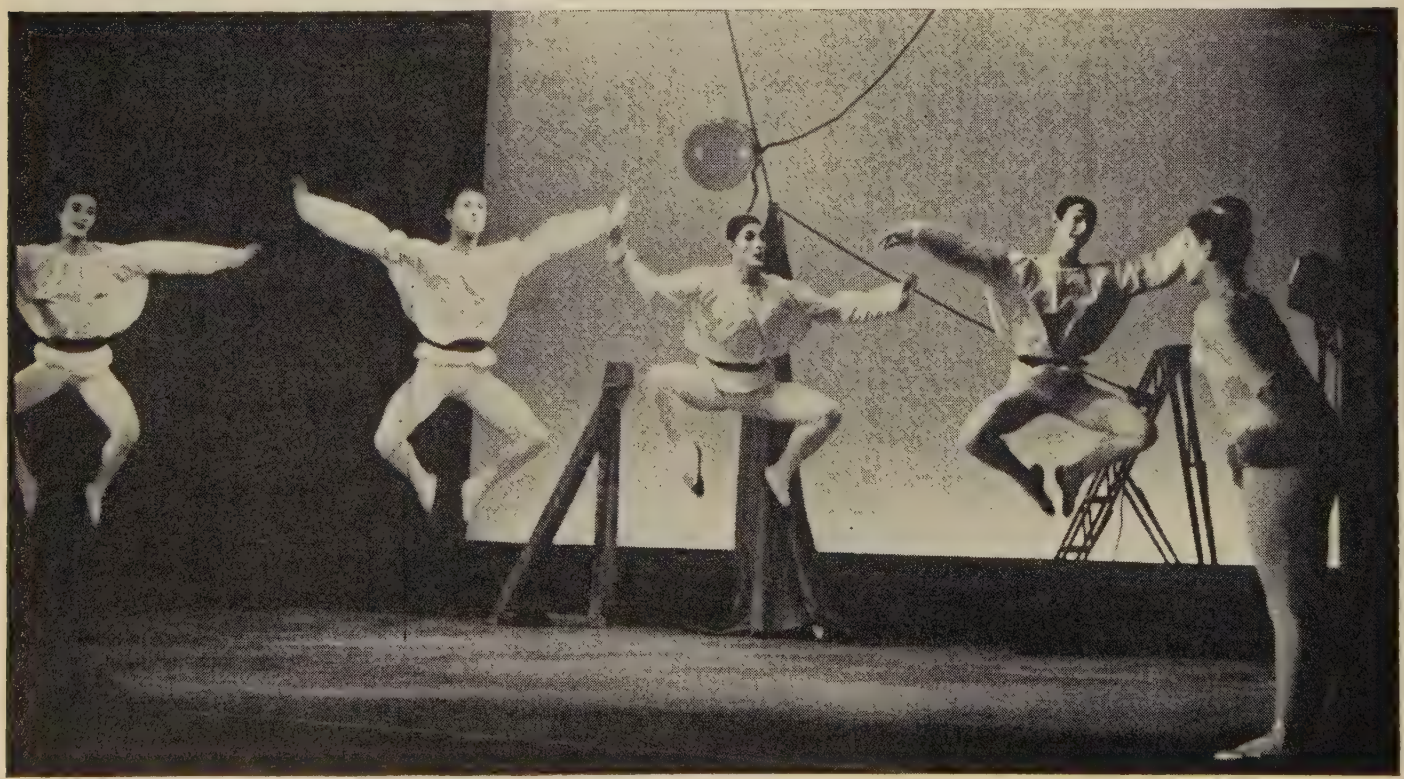
Either the pianist who was playing the music, or the piano on which he was playing it, was not quite up to it. I suspect a bit of both.

OLD BALLETS

IN the first programme, I very much liked Hazel Merry, Dennis Griffith and Oliver Symons in the perennially amusing *Non-Stop,* although personally I could do without their character calls. A few minutes later, for such is the pace at which this company has to work, Merry and Griffith were dancing Meriel Evans's *pas de deux Love Duet* with a convincing air of rapt enchantment. This programme ended with Darrell's *Bal de la Victoire,* a somewhat dusty chandelier ballet, which I will never rank among my favourites of the *genre.* It might be said that it makes an end to a programme, but I am tempted to adapt a line from *Waiting for Godot,* and point out that "the programme would have ended anyway". However, it does give full rein to this company's remarkable talent for dramatic interplay, and they really throw themselves into it, acting not only like crazy, but with genuine intelligence. In this connection I particularly noticed Peter Cazalet, although the dancing honours went to the haughtily assured Dennis Griffth.

Having been slightly disappointed by

Continued on page 37



Classical Landscape with Figures

by **PETER WILLIAMS**

Against a background of the ancient Mediterranean world, Soviet choreographer VLADIMIR BOURMEISTER, assisted by his wife ANTONINA, creates The Snow Maiden **for London's Festival Ballet.**

THE afternoon sun slants through the few remaining pillars of Pompeii's Forum, the lengthening shadows give greater shape to buildings previously flattened by the glare of high noon. The blue of the surrounding mountains becomes streaked with a deeper purple as they are thrown up into relief. The cloudless sky is an all-over wash of pale but penetrating turquoise. There is the stillness of slumber over the labyrinthine remains of a town which the Oscans inhabited six centuries before Christ and which later grew into considerable importance under Greeks and Etruscans until, under the Romans, in 80 B.C., it became a flourishing commercial and industrial city — only to be obliterated 96 years later by a devastating earthquake. In a bed of preserving lava, the city and its inhabitants slept until the mid-eighteenth century and, although excavations have gone on ever since, only two-thirds have yet been uncovered. Today the only sounds which disturb these slumbers are the tramp of tourist feet and the call of swifts as they soar and dart through the gaping remains.

The pre-eruption inhabitants of Pompeii would have goggled in disbelief if they knew that a small party of people now tramping their streets had three hours previously been tramping the streets of a city in the far north, in a country then unknown to them, which later became know as Londinium. Such is the speed and comfort of travel in a Comet that it is now possible to do a morning's work in London, see Pompeii in the afternoon and not feel tired. In this party of people are two to whom the Mediterranean and its wonders are quite new, and it is about these two — Vladimir and Antonina Bourmeister — that I intend to talk. He is the first Soviet choreographer to create a new ballet in the West and the reason he and his wife are in Italy is because he is mounting a full-length work to Tchaikovsky music for London's Festival Ballet who are touring there.

It is revealing to watch people faced by ancient ruins — either they pass on and dismiss everything as "just ruins" or they become almost transfigured and so absorbed that they almost start to live the life that the ruins knew in their days of glory. The Bourmeisters fall into the latter category and almost take on the colour of the surroundings. Already they would seem to be knowledgeable of Pompeii's ancient history and, as the days pass and I see them against other backgrounds in Naples and Rome, I become increasingly aware of their deep knowledge of all forms of art, and here they have much in common with another Soviet creator, Igor Moiseyev, who once surprised me by knowing just what was in almost every art gallery in the West.

Vladimir Bourmeister has the head of an aesthete, fine bony structure, iron grey hair which sweeps off his broadish forehead with the emphasis of a seventh wave. The expression on his face can change in an instant — it can veer between worried concentration, which drains it, and alert vitality, between severity and kindness, between desperation and twinkling humour — all in the matter of a few seconds. The secret lies in the eyes, which have the depth one associates with Oriental sages, and the eyebrows, which indulge in quite a bit of choreography of their own. He is of medium height and slight build with the kind of figure that always looks perfectly dressed and the sort of man who you would always single out in a crowd. He has the most natural good manners I have encountered in the world of ballet, and this means a lot in a world that more and more is tending to brush aside these refinements of living. During a pause in a rehearsal he will come and greet anyone who has dropped in to watch and will kiss the hands of ladies with the utmost courtliness and charm — this means more than you might think when you realise that he is deep in the worrying process of creation. I also remember the way which he stood by the door of a bus that was taking a party of us, including Markova, to see the wonders of floodlit Rome — at every stopping point Bourmeister waited to help all the ladies down the steep steps. I am told by those who understand Russian that his every utterance has a poetitc turn of phrase, and although I personally can understand little or nothing of that language I found that he was so expressive that much of what he said was far clearer than are the rumblings and grunts that often pass for English.

His name first became known to Western Europe when his company from Moscow's Stanislavsky Theatre first appeared in Paris five or six years ago. His production of *Swan Lake* was then hailed as the finest yet seen in the West, but this was the culmination of work that had been going on since 1933 when he choreographed his first ballet, *Le Corsaire,* for the Stanislavsky Theatre, a theatre which has been his life. He says that two men have influenced him most — his Ballet Master, Goleizovsky, and the man who was co-director of the Moscow Arts Theatre with Stanislavsky, Nemirovitch Dantchenko, with whom he worked from 1934. He worked a great deal in the straight theatre and for straight plays, such as *Hamlet,* he choreographed the dancing and movement — this all has a very important bearing on his present approach to the production of ballet about which I shall have more to say later. His creations for ballet have been as numerous as they have been varied, and it would be boring at this point to go into the full list of them, but apart from Russian classics the list includes works such as *Schéhérazade, Carnaval, The Legend of Ochrid, Chopiniana, Joan of Arc* and operettas such as *La Belle Hélène.* He has a deep affection for the work of Ravel and has already created ballets to *Bolero* and *La Valse.*

Antonina Bourmeister is slightly more thick-set than her husband and first impressions cause one to think that she is rather severe, which may be partly due to the fact that she wears her abundant hair pulled back straight off her forehead and twisted into an enormous bun. First impressions are quite wrong because she has one of the kindest natures I have ever encountered and has the most beautiful eyes — she also has a delicious sense of fun. She was a Bolshoi ballerina, under the name of Antonina Krupenina, and for special occasions when she wants to dress up she can look ravishingly beautiful.

The shadows in Pompeii are lengthening. The Bourmeisters have listened with the utmost patience to Italian guides who seem to materialise from the paving stones at every point where you might want to see something, they have listened for ages to a guide who prided himself on his stentorian use of the spoken word, talking

about the Temple of Isis in a language of which they understood not one word. It's time to return to Naples, which is, I think, one of the dirtiest, noisiest cities in Europe — yet I love it. The Neapolitans never forget their Commedia dell'Arte ancestry and at every corner there seems to be a Pulcinello. They may rob you but that's your fault and anyway they do it with all the charm in the world so you forgive them. It is a city that is immensely vital and full of life. It boasts two marvellous art galleries—the Museo Nazionale and the Museo di Capodimonte—and innumerable places of wonder within short distance including two islands — Capri and Ischia. The former seems to have been wrecked, I'm sorry to say, by our own beloved Gracie Fields, whose club and swimming pool, Cante del Mare, has become the Island's focal point. Ischia, being bigger, has so far not been wrecked by anybody, though it seems that a number of film stars have had a good try — long may they fail. This lush green island with its almost unhealthy rush of flowers is I think one of the most beautiful islands on earth.

In Naples we stay at the Ambassador's Palace — an ugly towering skyscraper from the outside, inside it is a Tower of Babel with every language spoken noisily but with a beautiful view and the sensation that you are suspended over the city. Festival Ballet plays in the San Carlo Opera House, which is vast and has recently been re-burnished so that the auditorium glows like a gold casket heavily encrusted with rubies. Here the company repeats the success that it has had continually in Italy throughout this European tour, and the Neapolitan audience shouts and applauds wildly. The company is dancing better than it has for years and it manages to overcome the poor lighting and Cinerama-like width of the stage — for a dancer to get from the centre of the stage to the wings seems to take a lifetime. It would seem that every stage in the world has to be looked at with new eyes and every ballet re-lit and re-set accordingly.

In rehearsal rooms high up above the stage, the Bourmeisters continue to rehearse and create *The Snow Maiden.* Such is the love and enthusiasm that they have engendered in the company that everyone is happily prepared to work at all hours. I am very struck by how graphic the ballet is even in its unfinished state and without any costumes or scenery. Even in these cold unsympathetic rehearsal rooms, the dancers seem to be giving performances that are stirring and moving, and something is happening that I have seldom yet seen in the rehearsals of Western ballet companies — this close identification by the dancers with the characters they are going to portray. Then I remembered that Bourmeister had been closely connected with Nemirovitch-Danchenko and Stanislavsky's Moscow Art Theatre where the actors are taught to use their whole bodies and also to approach the characters they are playing from within so that it shines out rather than just being a surface portrait.

According to Vassilie Trunoff, who speaks Russian fluently, it was during the early stages in England that Bourmeister stopped a rehearsal and told the company that "the ultimate ambition of every artist should be to have technique and to be able to switch on and off emotions and reactions at a moment's notice, The physical technique of the dance can be conquered by intense hard work, but what I want is the inner feeling of the rôle. That's difficult."

From the start Bourmeister has insisted on this identification with the characters and that the dancers should go through each emotion as it takes place. He made it clear that he wanted none of what has come to be called "traditional mime" — that senseless semaphoring that means nothing to the average member of the audience — but that each member of the company should react instinctively to every situation as it takes place. This is something that the dancer has to work out for himself; the choreographer can only tell them the situation and then they act accordingly.

This is naturally of the greatest importance in a narrative ballet, and *The Snow Maiden* has a strong story, but it should also affect the dancers' approach to every other kind of ballet. Already I notice that the rest of Festival Ballet's repertory, being performed on the stage downstairs, is being injected with a new awareness. It is noticeable in *The Witch Boy,* in *Swan Lake* and even in *Les Sylphides* and *Bourrée Fantasque.*

In the few spare moments, the Bourmeisters try to see as much as they can of the museums and surroundings of Naples, and the gorgeous composition of the sculptures and the glowing Pompeian and Etruscan paintings must certainly have inspired him in his choreography.

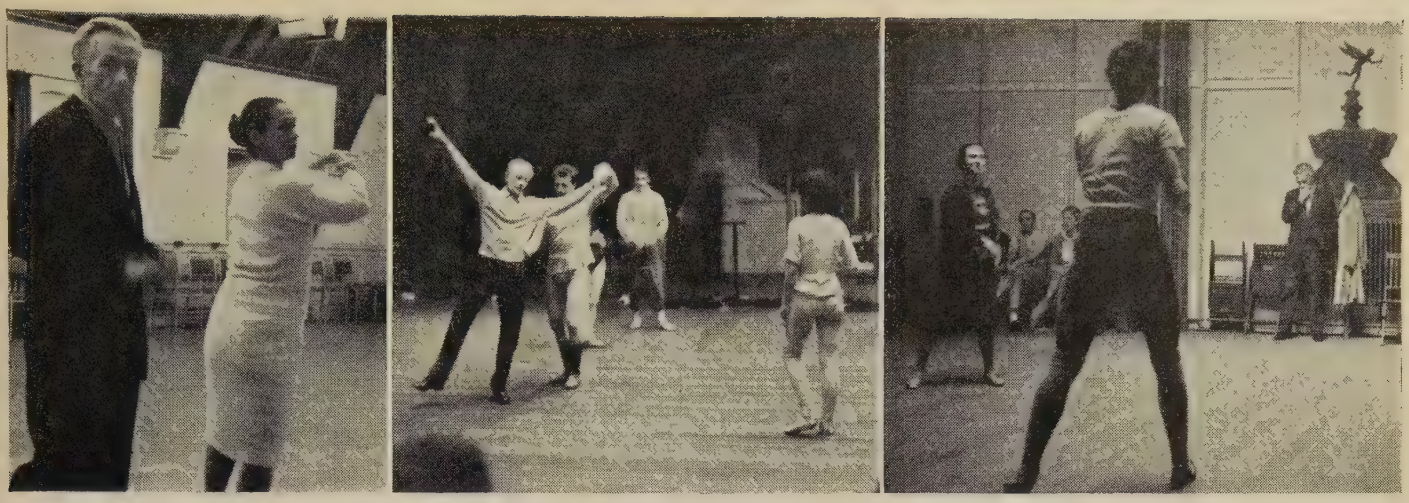
Then we move on to Rome arriving, purely by chance, for the Corpus Christi processions. Again as in Pompeii, the first sight of Rome is in the evening — one of those typical Roman evenings when its magnificent ruins and the dumpy umbrella pines and the sharp points of the cypresses are thrown up against a clear sky, a sky which seems to have in Rome a greater luminosity than anywhere I know.

In yet another rehearsal room, this time way up above Rome's Teatro dell'Opera, the Bourmeisters have a few clear days to rehearse before the season opens. It was here that I had a greater chance of seeing how he worked. Naturally before anything he becomes thoroughly soaked in the music — reading from the score, listening to it on tape or being played to him on the piano. Ostrovsky's story of *The Snow Maiden* was something he had been brought up with so that presented no particular problem — how to adapt it to the Tchaikovsky score, written anyway as incidental music, did. These problems are worked out before coming to rehearsal. On a three-act work, Bourmeister starts at the end so that the last act, the most important, will have his freshest inspiration.

Unlike many choreographers, he does not come to rehearsal with everything cut and dried. He has a pattern in his mind but it is only in a rough stage. He will set a passage, give a dramatic description of what is happening at that point, demonstrate to the dancers what he wants — then stand back. At this point, Antonina Bourmeister takes over and rehearses the dancers while he watches. Then he will invariably make changes, using the dancers' bodies as a form of modelling clay which he will gradually shape according to how he feels is most right and fit. Occasionally the two of them will demonstrate together and these moments are some of the greatest lessons in style I have ever seen. To watch them show a character dance, of which there are many in the ballet, is something I wish every British company could experience.

Sometimes he works with the principals only, sometimes with the *corps,* and some-

RELAXATION: Within an hour of landing in Italy the Bourmeisters visit Pompeii. Below left are Jess Fraser (the Editor's sister), Peter Williams, Mireille Briansky, Ronald Emblen, Antonina and Vladimir Bourmeister. One from left, Briansky and Mrs. Bourmeister in a Pompeian street. Centre, Mireille Briansky against the Forum of Pompeii. Photos: Oleg Briansky.



WORK: Before leaving for Italy, the Bourmeisters started to rehearse The Snow Maiden *with London's Festival Ballet in the English provinces. Left, Mrs. Bourmeister demonstrates the movements her husband has just thought up. Centre, Bourmeister shows a step to Louis Godfrey while Jelko Yuresha and Belinda Wright watch. Right, Mrs. Bourmeister rehearses with Oleg Briansky while Bourmeister thinks up the next move under a statue of Eros. Photos: Ivan Baptie.*

times with everyone. Gradually these short phrases become welded together until they become a flowing utterance. In fact "flow" is the best way of describing Bourmeister's choreography. He uses the classical vocabulary so that it sings. What he does is full of invention yet nothing, I repeat *nothing*, is ever used just for the sake of being clever. Lifts are numerous but they are only used at the right moment — to emphasise an emotional or dramatic climax — and the way he brings his dancer down from them is as fascinating as the lift itself. *Soli* and *pas de deux* are welded into the drama and into the character dances so that everything emerges naturally out of everything else and without those breaks and pauses which so often destroy the continuity in many ballets, particularly in full-length ones. He seems to have dedicated his choreography to Ostrovsky's story and to Tchaikovsky's music, for both of which he has an obviously deep feeling, rather than a display of choreographic genius. This is what narrative choreography should be and is what Fokine realised in such a masterly way in his pioneering years at the beginning of this century, and is also what Ashton has striven for in his latter years and very successfully in the case of his *Ondine* and also *La Fille Mal Gardée*. Bourmeister does all this but with a flavour that could be nothing other than Russian.

Bourmeister goes patiently and quietly on; he seldom raises his voice except to describe some highly dramatic point in the story. He is, however, a perfectionist, and will not stop until a dancer has completely mastered what is expected or he is completely satisfied with his own work. Sometimes during his wanderings around Naples or Rome he would look preoccupied; later I found out the reason was that he was not satisfied with a certain passage in the ballet — the next day it would be scrapped and a fresh start made. But all this does not mean that Bourmeister works slowly, he does in fact work very fast and completed the whole forty-minute last act of *The Snow Maiden* in under five weeks, and these were very broken weeks because the company was giving performances in the theatre during all that time. It meant that rehearsals had to be snatched between company class, repertory rehearsals and regular performances. Only people who had captured the love and deep respect of a company could ever managed to instill in it the desire to spend so many extra hours of gruelling work. For the dancers there may be tears of tiredness and disappointments and all those things attendant upon the exhaustion of anything creative, but all is soon forgotten in the excitement of doing something they firmly believe in.

At the moment of writing it is impossible to say how *The Snow Maiden* will turn out in performance — the gap between rehearsals, even as stimulating as these were, and what finally takes place upon the stage, is a wide and dangerous one. But whatever the results (which Florence first sees in part, and London sees in whole when Festival Ballet opens its London season on July 17) I am inclined to think that no two people sent by Russia to work with British people could possibly — and quite unconsciously — have done more to strengthen Anglo-Soviet relations than have Vladimir and Antonina Bourmeister.

MASTER AND PUPIL: While the Bourmeisters were with Festival Ballet in Naples, they spent a day with Violetta Elvin (now Signora Sevarese) and her husband at their home near Sorrento. Former and beloved Royal Ballet star Violetta Elvin used to be a pupil of Bourmeister when she was a child in Moscow. One from right, Bourmeister with Elvin. Right, Antonina and Vladimir Bourmeister at sea in Elvin's motor boat. Photos: Oleg Briansky.

THE SNOW MAIDEN: *On July 17, London's Festival Ballet will mount a new three-act ballet,* The Snow Maiden, *which will be the first ballet designed for a British ballet company by Soviet designers. The three designs above, by Yuri Piminov and Gennady Epishin, are for the costumes of Father Frost (left), the* corps de ballet *of* Snowflakes *from the first act (centre), and for Lel, the shepherd boy (right).*
Photos: Mike Davis.

FESTIVAL BALLET

THE Summer of 1961 is providing unusual activity for British ballet companies in London in spite of the fact that the two Royal Ballet companies are out of town. As a form of preview to these events, here are some of the designs for London's Festival Ballet's *The Snow Maiden* which opens at the Royal Festival Hall on July 17 and for Ballet Rambert's *Night Shadow* and the new Norman Morrice ballet which will be given during the three-week season which opens at the Sadler's Wells Theatre on July 18.

BALLET RAMBERT

Designs for the

NIGHT SHADOW: *Ballet Rambert will open its London season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, with a production of Balanchine's* Night Shadow. *The English designer, Alix Stone, who was so successful with the Royal Ballet's* Sweeney Todd, *has been commissioned to design the revival which has been mounted by John Taras. The model for her setting is seen below.* *Photo: Allegro.*

THE SNOW MAIDEN: *Three more costume designs by Yuri Pimonov and Gennady Epishin for Festival Ballet's new three-act ballet to some little-known Tchaikovsky music, and which has been produced and choreographed by the famous Soviet choreographer, Vladimir Bourmeister. They are for Kupava (left), the Snow Maiden (centre) and her lover Mizgir (right). The ballet has been based on the fairy tale of Alexander Ostrovsky and it was for a play based on this story that Tchaikovsky originally composed the music now used. The Rimsky-Korsakov opera on the same theme came later.* *Photos: Mike Davis.*

new ballets of London's Summer

A PLACE IN THE DESERT: *A regular feature of Ballet Rambert's London season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre is a new work by Norman Morrice. This year is no exception, and for this dramatic work about building a dam in the desert, Morrice has returned to the same team who helped to make the succcess of his previous* Hazaña. *The music is by Surinac and the designs are by Ralph Koltai, a model of whose setting is seen below.* *Photo: Allegro.*

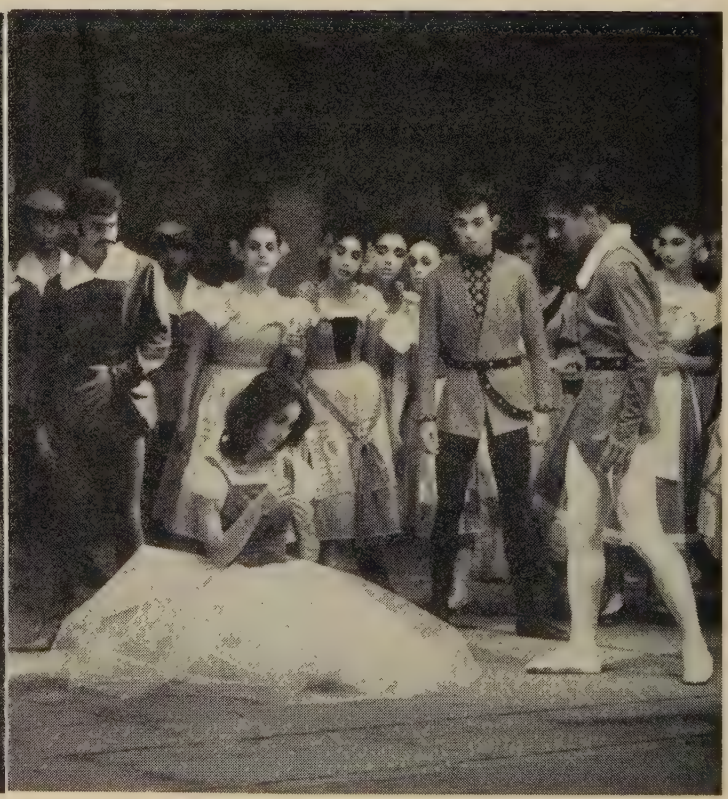
GISELLE *IN TURKEY: Meriç Sumen, as Giselle, and Sait Sökmen as Albrecht, in Molly Lake's production of the ballet for the State Conservatoire in Ankara.* *Photo: Osman Darcan.*

Britons bring ballet to Middle East

TURKEY

THIS has been an eventful season for the ballet in Turkey. Following the successful production of *Coppélia* at the Opera House and the third visit of "a group of dancers from the Bolshoi Theatre", we have

LOVE AND MADNESS: Meriç Sumen and Sait Sökmen in two more scenes from Act 1 of Giselle, *which had such a great success in Turkey.* *Photo: Osman Darcan.*



had the production by Molly Lake and Travis Kemp of *Giselle* with dancers from the State Conservatoire. Performances were given both at the Conservatoire, to inaugurate the celebrations of the 25th birthday of that institution, and later at the State Opera House, when the programme also included two works by the American choreographer Todd Bolender, *Création du Monde* to the score of Darius Milhaud, and *The Still Point* to Debussy's String Quartet in G minor.

All the dancers taking part are students in the Conservatoire Ballet School and the soloists are all in their final year with the exception of Sait Sökmen (Albrecht), who still has a year more of study.

The production marks the culmination of seven years' unceasing hard work and perseverance on the part of Molly Lake and Travis Kemp through whose efforts Turkey can now so proudly present dancers of the quality of Binay Okurer (who dances Swanilda in *Coppélia),* Meriç Sumen (Giselle), Sait Sökmen (Albrecht) and Gulcan Tunççekiç (Queen of the Wilis).

Molly Lake's production of *Giselle* is undoubtedly the highlight of this season and has been acclaimed by the Turkish public. Her presentation has brought new life to a ballet which has long suffered from uninspired production. This is surely the most beautiful of all the old classical ballets and rightly deserves its place in the repertoire of the leading ballet companies, but so often the real beauty of the ballet is lost either through inexpert or unimaginative production or by melodramatic interpretation on the part of the players. Molly Lake's *Giselle* rises triumphantly into higher spheres and her production is a work of real art, containing dancing which is sheer poetry and mime which is as moving as anything seen in the interpretation of this ballet for a very long time.

Meriç Sümen gives a performance which is touching in its simplicity as well as exquisite in its execution. Her whole interpretation of the rôle from her first entry with all the sunshine of a young girl in love radiant in her face to her grief and despair culminating in madness and death marks her as an artist with an important career ahead of her. She has a good command of technique and her performance both in the first and second acts is a real achievement for a dancer as yet inexperienced as she is.

Sait Sökmen plays Albrecht with a touching sincerity which brings to this rôle a sympathy which is so often lacking. He is an artist with a strong sense of theatre. His miming is spontaneous and unforced. His technique is quite remarkable and his performance at the final curtain (so excellently re-staged by Molly Lake) gives an entirely new meaning to the whole plot. Gone are the melodramatics with Albrecht flinging himself round the stage in a paroxysm of despair. Here we have a Prince who, taking strength from this encounter with his beloved, is able, we feel, to take up the threads of his life again in the knowledge that his sin has been forgiven. His final collapse upon the cross is a gesture of overwhelming love and gratitude, not one of despair. Sait Sökmen's performance has all the dignity of a Prince as well as that of a young man whose heart is broken.

Gülcan Tunççekiç acquits herself well in the difficult and thankless rôle of the Queen of the Wilis, but it is in *The Still Point* of Todd Bolender that she really comes into her own. She is a dancer with great dramatic depths and can, with correct handling and production, become Turkey's Nora Kaye. She does to perfection that most difficult of all things in the theatre, to stand still doing nothing. Downstage, on the footlights, she lets us know every thought which passes through her mind while she stands immobile.

Todd Bolender's choreography is in what we have learned to call the "American Idiom". It was a very courageous experiment on the part of the Director of the Conservatoire to bring an American choreographer to work with the young Turkish dancers, who, until now, have worked only under British direction. It was a highly successful experiment and the dancers took to this new idiom like ducks to water and gave a performance of *Création du Monde* which astonished everyone with its understanding of the American way of life (and the American way of dancing!).

But it is *Giselle* which lingers in the memory at the close of this, the first important season of ballet in Turkey. This is dancing in all its beauty, and a production which can compare with any production in the world today.

Beatrice Appleyard.

IRAN

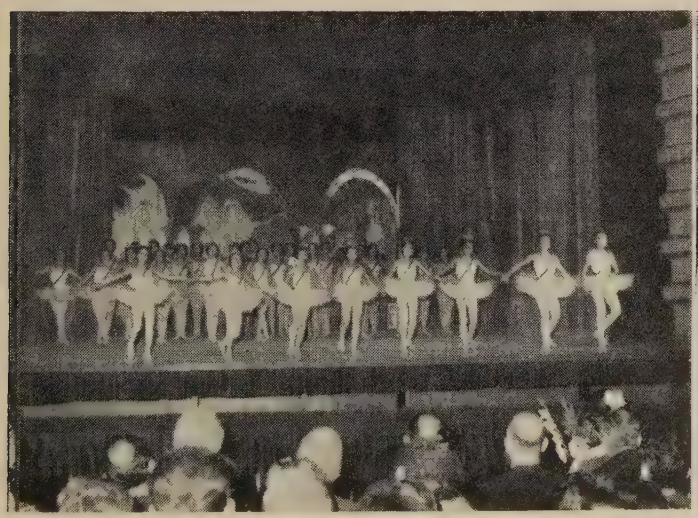
A YEAR ago two ex-members of the Royal Ballet—Miro Zolan and his wife Sandra Vane—left England for Tehran to teach and organise ballet at the Iranian National Ballet Academy. As it is in most countries without any ballet tradition, this pioneering work has been hard and an uphill struggle. It is not that the dancers are unenthusiastic, far from it, but naturally they need to have a strict sense of discipline instilled in them; also the co-operation of those who can help in other practical ways has to be won. The struggle has been the same even in far more ballet-conscious countries such as Australia or Canada or, come to that, pre-war England.

The clue to how successful the pioneering has been comes when there is something to show the public. It is all very well to run academies which turn out good dancers, but until they can be shown in some sort of performance, nobody outside is particularly interested.

Miro Zolan and Sandra Vane passed their first milestone in Persia when on May 10, 11 and 12 they showed the Iranian National Ballet Academy in a programme of ballets interspersed with demonstration classes. Queen Farah Pahlavi and members of the Royal family came to a performance as well as the British Ambassador, Sir Geoffrey, and Lady Harrison, and other prominent people in Tehran. The Queen, after the performance, told Zolan how much she had enjoyed the performance, and others expressed surprise and delight that so much had been accomplished in so short a time. It is possible that, after this, it might be easier to get more support for ballet in spite of the fact that so many people make promises that they do not always keep.

In addition to the demonstration classes, Zolan arranged a classical work, *The Classical Première,* to Gluck music and which used 44 dancers; a work using Modern dance, *One and Two Makes Four,* to Ravel music; a character ballet, *Rossiniada,* to Rossini/Britten music; and the *Grand pas de deux* from *Don Quixote.* Zolan was responsible for the arrangement and choreography in all the ballets and Sandra Vane designed all the costumes, while settings were designed by a local artist, M. Cheibani.

FIRST PERFORMANCE IN TEHRAN: Left, the final curtain after Miro Zolan's The Classical Première, *which used 44 dancers, and was given at a special performance by the Iranian National Ballet Academy in the presence of Queen Farah Pahlavi. Right, Miro Zolan being presented to the Queen after the performance.*



BRITISH PRODUCTION: The corps de ballet *of London's Festival Ballet, who are the only British company yet to have mounted Lichine's* Graduation Ball. *This production uses Alexandre Benois' original designs.*

BALLET PERSPECTIVES : 24

Graduation Ball

by CLIVE BARNES

DAVID LICHINE'S *Graduation Ball* was in a very real sense the final flowering of the Ballets Russes. From Diaghilev's first Paris season in 1909 right up until the last war, apart from the interregnum following Diaghilev's death, the Ballets Russes, in one guise or another, had ruled the roost in the ballet of the Western world. In a sense it was always running down creatively, and its standards, which had started to decline during the latter years of Diaghilev, plunged sharply when it was re-formed and completely reorientated after his death. Eventually the ex-patriate Ballets Russes yielded to the ever-growing forces of the national ballets all over the world, which they themselves had indirectly activated. *Graduation Ball,* produced in 1940, proved to be the Ballets Russes's swan-song. It was its last success, and nothing but degeneration and chaos awaited it — even though much of what was valuable in the Ballets Russes's tradition became absorbed into the freshly emergent forces of American ballet.

Graduation Ball gave its choreographer, David Lichine, his first outstanding success. Lichine was born in Russia, but went to Paris with his family while still a child. In 1928 he was a member of Ida Rubinstein's company, and then in 1932, when he was 22 years old, he was one of the founder members of Colonel de Basil's first Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. His choreographic debut came a year later when he created *Nocturne,* a ballet based upon *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* with Massine, Danilova, Woizikovsky, Riabouchinska, Baronova, Borovanski, Eglevsky, Shabelevsky, Jasinsky, Petroff and Lichine himself. Its success was, in Lichine's words, "slight, to put it mildly".

Lichine's second ballet, *Les Imaginaires,* given in 1934, seems to have fared little better. Cyril Beaumont, in his book *The Monte Carlo Russian Ballet,* describes the theme as follows: "Here Geometry has been laid under contribution to provide a theme for ballet. Circle, symbol of womanhood, and Triangle, symbol of manhood, brought to life on a blackboard through the medium of Chalk, dance and fall in love. But jealous Star, symbol of evil, calls upon Sponge to obliterate Triangle. Sponge agrees and Circle is overcome with grief. In the second scene some Stops, sympathising with Circle, induce Chalk to recreate Triangle. Chalk complies, but Sponge forces Triangle to frighten all who approach; then, tiring of the play, Sponge destroys all that Chalk has created."

However, Lichine subsequently had some success with both *Francesca da Rimini* (1937) and *Protée* (1938), and also two new versions of earlier Balanchine ballets, *The Gods Go a'Begging* (1938) and *The Prodigal Son* (1939). Nevertheless, the first of his ballets ever to enter the international repertory was the ever-popular *Graduation Ball.* In *World Ballet* (edited by Arnold Haskell), Lichine himself has written about the creation of *Graduation Ball,* in the form of a very charming open letter to his daughter, Tania. The ballet, it appears, drew on a number of incidents from Lichine's own life.

The first of these happened just before the Russian Revolution, when he was a little boy still living in his home town of Rostov-on-the-Don, and he used to play at being a drummer-boy. His father was a professor at the Philharmonia in Rostov, but Lichine at that time had the youthful ambition of becoming a military drummer. Not unexpectedly this came to nothing, although it did lead to one of the most important rôles in *Graduation Ball.*

Nor were the young Lichine's military ambitions completely frustrated, for when he was 12-years-old, his family, then exiled from Russia following the Revolution, sent him to a Russian Military Academy at Peschera in Bulgaria. As Lichine describes it: "The academy was administered by a red-haired general with a shiny airfield for a scalp. The cadets slept in a huge dormitory . . . adjacent to the academy but separated from it by a high wall, was a girls' school. It provided the older cadets and girls with considerable opportunities for flirtation and romantic dreams. Alas, at my age during this period I was interested only in football, sweets and milk. But I was very observant and this talent I put to profitable use. Whenever dancing parties were arranged between the two schools, I was chosen as the mail carrier between various couples, romantically inclined. Being very indiscreet as well as observant, I learned to know the con-

tents of all the letters charged to my care — to know of all the innocent love affairs with their accompanying gossip, comment and what not." Here is basically the theme of *Graduation Ball*.

Later, Lichine's family decided to move to Paris, and in 1926 he travelled with his parents from Bulgaria to his new home up the Danube to Budapest and finally Vienna, where they were to catch the train to Paris. There, waiting for the Paris train, Lichine spent "several glorious hours, wandering through the charming alfresco cafés as they glowed in the beautiful summer evening and listening to the effervescent music of Johann Strauss — hours that left an indelible imprint on my memory."

When in 1939 Colonel de Basil was locked in his now immortal struggle with Massine's more recently formed Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, and needed a new work, Lichine came up with the idea for *Graduation Ball*. The music was arranged by Antal Dorati from the music of Johann Strauss the Younger, and incorporated a few unpublished pieces discovered by Dorati in the manuscript collection of the Vienna State Opera Library. Lichine's original plan, described in the summer before the war to Cyril Beaumont, was to call the ballet *Perpetuum Mobile*, and the scenery and costumes were commissioned from Alexandre Benois.

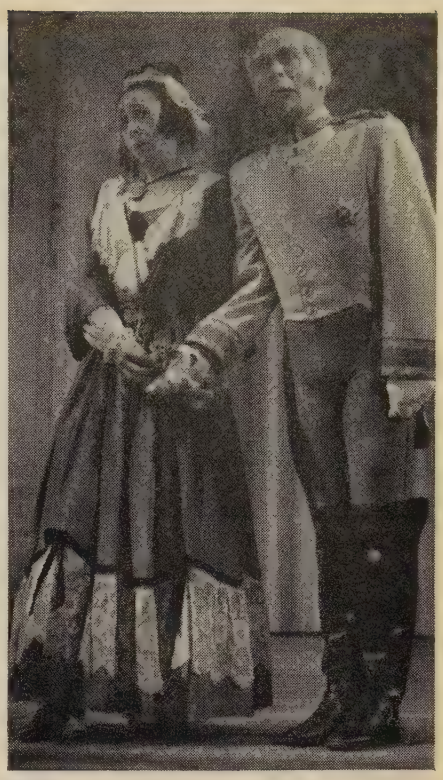
For the first year of the war the de Basil company found itself in Australia, and it was there that *Graduation Ball*, as it was eventually called, had its first performance at the Theatre Royal, Sydney, on February 28, 1940. The cast had Tatiana Riabouchinska as the leader of the junior girls, and David Lichine as the Leading Cadet, with Borislav Runanine as the Headmistress, Igor Schwezoff as the old General, Nicolas Orlov as the Drummer, Tatiana Leskova in the Impromptu Dance, Alexandra Denisova and Genevieve Moulin in the Dance Competition, and Natasha Sobinova and Paul Petroff as La Sylphide and the Scotsman. In this original version Tatiana Riabouchinska and Lichine, in leading the *divertissement* called "Perpetuum Mobile", changed into costumes as a ringmaster and equestrienne, and the dance was performed as a circus number. When the Original Ballet Russe first performed the ballet in New York on November 6, 1940, not only was this changed, but the dance previously, and more properly, known as "La Sylphide and the Scotsman", was called "Giselle and the Scotsman". At the American première this *pas de deux* was danced by Tatiana Stepanova and Michel Panaieff, and the Impromptu Dance was omitted. Apart from this the cast was the same as in Sydney.

This De Basil production was seen in England for the first time on July 22, 1947, at Covent Garden with the cast once again led by Riabouschinska and Lichine. The rest of the cast included Paul Grinwis as the Headmistress, John Taras as the General, Nicolas Orlov as the Drummer, Barbara Lloyd in the Impromptu Dance, Renée Jeanmaire and Geneviéve Moulin in the Dance Step Competition, and Moussia Larkina and Vladimir Skouratoff in Giselle and the Scotsman. "Perpetuum Mobile" was not, of course, given as a circus number, and another number included in the original ballet, "The Mathematics and Natural History Lesson," was omitted.

After the original De Basil version there were many other productions of *Graduation Ball*, most of them having individual modifications made in the *divertissement* section, to suit the various needs of the individual companies.

The first was that given by Ballet Theatre, originally produced at the St. Denis Theatre, Montreal, on September 26, 1944. This had new scenery and costumes by Mstislav Dobujinsky, which bore a certain family resemblance to the original Benois designs. The cast, once again led by Riabouchinska and Lichine, also included Alpheus Koon as the Headmistress, John Taras as the General, Rosella Hightower in the Dance Impromptu, John Kriza as the Drummer and Marjorie Tallchief and Margaret Banks in the Dance Step Competition. In addition to the "Mathematics and Natural History Lesson", "Giselle (La Sylphide) and the Scotsman" was also omitted, while there were three significant additions. These were a new classical *pas de deux*, set to the *Komm' in die Gondel* waltz from Strauss's *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, danced by Alicia Alonso and Richard Reed, a dance for a Tyrolian Boy performed by Harold Lang and a new additional variation for the senior girl, first danced, of course, by Tatiana Riabouchinska. Apart from the Tyrolian Boy, who was abandoned when Ballet Theatre revived the work in 1952, the other two interpolations have held their place to the present day.

Lichine also revived the ballet for the Teatro Colon, Buenos Aires, after the war, and it was here, incidentally, that in 1947 he produced a sequel to *Graduation Ball* called *Girls' Dormitory*. In September, 1949, Serge Denham's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo obtained Dobujinsky's settings and costumes from Sol Hurok, and revived the ballet in a production mounted by Vladimir Dokoudovsky. It was Dokoudovsky who was also responsible for the ballet's next revival, mounted by the English company, George Kirsta's Original Ballet Russe. The production was first given at the Wimbledon Theatre on October 1, 1951. The cast was led by Dokoudovsky and his wife, Nina Stroganova, and included Jack Spurgeon as the Headmistress, Anthony Burke as the General, Kiril Vassilkovsky as the Drummer, Inge Sand in the Danse Impromptu, Joan Tucker and Herida May in the Dance Step Competition, and Maya Koumani and

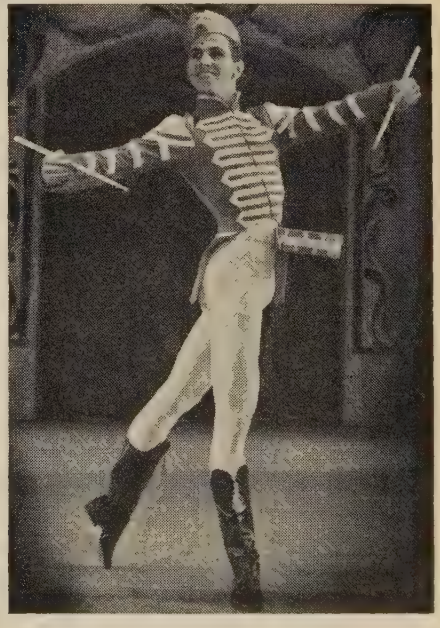


THE GENERAL AND HEADMISTRESS: Sven Erik Jensen and Gerda Karstens of the Royal Danish Ballet, who have never been surpassed in these two rôles.

Glen Gordon in "Giselle and the Scotsman". When Lichine himself revived the work for the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen, it was given new scenery and costumes by Ove Chr. Pedersen. It was first produced on March 22, 1952, at the Royal Theatre. The cast included Fredbjorn Bjornsson as the Leading Cadet and Inge Sand as the Leading Junior Girl. The Headmistress was danced by Gerda Karstens, the General by Sven Erik Jensen. The Drummer was danced by Poul Gnatt,

Continued on page 38

TWO DRUMMERS: Left, Nicolas Orlov, who created the rôle and, right, the Danish Flemming Flindt, who played the part in Denmark and with Festival Ballet.



HIGH-LEVEL RECEPTIONS: Left, Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, wife of the U.S. President, talks to George Balanchine, Artistic Director of the New York City Ballet, after her recent visit to that company's performance. Right, Irina Kolpakova, ballerina of the Kirov Theatre Ballet, with Paris Opéra stars — Claude Bessy, Andréani and Claire Motte — at a reception for the Kirov company in the foyer of the Opéra. Photo: Lido.

curtain up!

Your help needed

OLGA PREOBRAJENSKA was one of the greatest ornaments of the Imperial Russian Ballet in St. Petersburg. Born in 1871 she became a ballerina in 1898 then later she taught at the Imperial School until she left Russia in 1921. After three years in Berlin she settled in Paris, where she has remained ever since teaching generations of dancers, and the whole ballet world is in her debt.

Now I hear from one of her most famous pupils, Irina Baronova, that she had an accident in May, broke her hip bone and had to be taken to the American Hospital in Paris. This news is made even more sorrowful owing to the fact that being 93 years old it is pretty obvious that Madame Preobrajenska will not be able to work again.

Now what has to be faced are the medical fees and the cost of her future maintenance in a home where she can be continually cared for. Ballet has, in the past, been generous in helping those of the family in need, and this member of the family is in dire need. You can help by sending a contribution, however small, to Irina Baronova-Tennant, Little Courtenay, West Drive, Sunningdale, Berks. Baronova has the Bank of England's permission to transfer the money to the "Fond de Secour pour Madame Olga Preobrajenska" in Paris. I know you will help. Thank you!

Snow Maiden as spoke

ONE of the off-stage joys of ballet is Dr. Julian Braunsweg's version of the English language. After having worked in this country as an impresario for well over thirty years it would appear, mercifully, to get no more coherent. Mr. Bean, Festival Hall's General Manager, said at the Press Reception to introduce the Soviet choreographer Vladimir Bourmeister, that recently Dr. Braunsweg gave him a straight-from-the-heart synopsis of Bourmeister's version of *The Snow Maiden,* which Festival Ballet are mounting for their summer season at Festival Hall, Here it is:

"Snow Maiden ballet all about lof. Snow Maiden she fall in lof with boy. But he no can dance with her, too cold, brrrr!! Come other boy with girl. Snow Maiden she fall in lof with new boy and he too with her. It make troble — *jalossy*! He get divorce-or-someth'ng against girl. Corps de ballet is *beautiful*. All girls make always the lof. Snow Maiden she leave Land of Snow with boy. The Tsar — boy's father-or-someth'ng — ask: 'Who is this girl my son lof?' She come to him. She so *beautiful* he say, 'Alright! You can make lof with her!' She come started to dance. Then from winter started to come summer. Moment sunshine find her she *melt*! *Beautiful* story!"

So now you know, and I doubt whether any programme note will be more descriptive than that.

Goodbye to a veteran

ALTHOUGH Julia Farron's farewell to the Royal Ballet's British public took place on the last night of the company's Covent Garden recent season, her actual farewell to the company takes place in Moscow. She retires from the company at the end of this season after a quarter-of-a-century's unbroken service to one company.

At one time, in the early days of her career, it looked as though she would become one of our leading classical dancers. This proved not to be the case, but she carved out for herself a respected position as a leading character dancer, as well as taking classical parts when occasion demanded.

I look forward to the day when we end the cult of ballerina worship and it becomes possible (as it is already among the men) for a character dancer to be a star just as much as a ballerina. When that day comes, some credit will have to go to the example Farron has set the younger dancers.

It seems unlikely that her retirement will be the end of Farron's connection with the ballet. During this season she had leave of absence to mount *Coppélia* for R.A.D. pupils at Liverpool, thus branching out into a new field of activity.

Only three of the pre-war Royal Ballet dancers now remain as dancing members of the company: Margot Fonteyn, Michael Somes and Leslie Edwards. This is the reason why our ballet so often looks ridiculously teenage.

Ballet for Baalbeck

THE smaller Royal Ballet seems to be getting around these days. Hardly were they recovering their land-legs after their long flight back from the Far East, where they tell me they had a most enjoyable time, when it was announced that they will appear in this year's Baalbeck Festival in the Lebanon.

They are to give four performances at the end of August and beginning of September and while in that part of the world they will also appear in Damascus and Athens.

Margot Fonteyn will once again be with them and she will have a new partner for the occasion: David Blair. Blair, who has already danced with Fonteyn in *Les Sylphides,* will now partner her in *Swan Lake* Act 2 and in *La Péri.* I am assured, however, that this does not mean that Michael Somes has retired from the stage, though rumour has it that he has given up his major dancing rôles.

The repertory chosen to match up to the immense temples in Baalbeck consists of Acts 2 and 3 of *Swan Lake,* given on different nights like instalments of a serial, Kenneth MacMillan's *Danses Concertantes* (which proved very successful in Tokyo), and three Ashton ballets — *Les Patineurs, Les Rendezvous* as well as *La Péri.*

Hard cash for new ballets

PEOPLE living outside London often complain that their subsidies help to pay for artistic benefits enjoyed mainly by the capital. Perhaps because of this, or possibly in furtherance of an enlightened policy of supporting the arts, the London County Council is this year dipping deeper into its corporate pocket to help pay for new ballets.

Festival Ballet, which is a private venture and without Arts Council subsidy, received £5,000 last year towards the cost of two new works. This year it will get £7,500 towards the cost of *The Snow Maiden.*

Ballet Rambert, which is aided by the London County Council to the extent of £2,000 a year, will have an extra £1,000 this year because of the longer season at Sadler's Wells and also because of the new production of Balanchine's *Night Shadow* and a new creation by Norman Morrice.

On a different level, I was delighted to learn that the Dorchester Ballet Club had sponsored Western Theatre Ballet's revival of Ray Powell's *One in Five,* which had such a success at Sunday Ballet Club almost a year ago. There is obviously still scope for initiative by ballet-goers as well as by public bodies. I hope that Dorchester's example will set a precedent for others to follow.

Gentlemen or Players?

AMATEUR ballet has two sets of disadvantages to conquer: those attaching to amateur dancers and those inseparable from amateur choreographers.

The Masque Ballet Club has decided to overcome one difficulty by inviting a professional choreographer, Andrée Howard, to mount a ballet for them. This is to be *Katharsis* to a special score by Geoffrey Wright and with scenery and costumes designed by Howard herself. It is to be given at Morley College on July 22 together with a new ballet by Bridget Kelly-Espinosa, *The Succuba,* to Richard Strauss music. There are also to be revivals of Leo Kersley's *The Lark Ascending* and Galeotti's *The Whims of Cupid and the Balletmaster,* the oldest ballet in the international repertory.

Our roving reporter

SOME of us envy the editor, Peter Williams, his frequent trips to the more glamorous parts of Europe and the Near East in search of new ballet companies. I am told that roving is deep in his blood coming from a line of pirates, wreckers and smugglers, who, at one time, had the more respectable title of "Channel rovers".

Now he will have a new excuse for journeying because, in company with Robert Helpmann and Kenneth Tynan, he has been appointed to the Drama Advisory Committee of the British Council.

The task of this committee of 14, with Norman Marshall as its chairman, is to advise on overseas tours by British drama, ballet and opera companies under the auspices of the British Council. Doubtless the staff of *Dance and Dancers* will be told in future that the boss is studying local conditions for himself. Or will it work the other way, so that he has to spend longer at home in order to see the companies which are to be sent abroad?

happy birthday to...

		July
Joan Cadzow	Dancing in Paris	17
Daphne Dale	De Cuevas International Ballet	18
Hazel Merry	Western Theatre Ballet	20
Angela Bayley	Teaching in Holland	22
Julia Farron	Ex-Royal Ballet	22
Alexis Rassine	Dancing in concerts	26
Anton Dolin		27
Alexander Bennett	The Royal Ballet	27
David Blair	The Royal Ballet	27
Jacques d'Amboise	New York City Ballet	28
Dennis Griffith	Western Theatre Ballet	28
		August
Georgina Parkinson	The Royal Ballet	4
Jacqueline Irvings	Canadian National Ballet	4
Doreen Tempest	Allegro Ballet, Chicago	4
Betty Oliphant	Canadian National Ballet	5
Oliver Symons	Western Theatre Ballet	6
Leslie Edwards	The Royal Ballet	7
Richard Adama	Vienna Opera Ballet	8
Jack Carter	Dancing in Holland	8
Ronald Plaisted	The Royal Ballet	9
George Goviloff	De Cuevas International Ballet	10
Angela Symonds	London's Festival Ballet	12
Sigurd Leeder	Teaching in Chile	14
Margaret Hill		16
Donald Britton	The Royal Ballet	17
Alfred Rodrigues	Choreographer in England	18
Carla Fracci	Teatro alla Scala	20
Donald MacLeary	The Royal Ballet	22

DANCE MAGAZINE AWARDS: Merce Cunningham, Maria Tallchief and Igor Moiseyev, winners of the Dance Magazine *1960 Awards. The theme of this year's honours was the contribution to the understanding amongst nations accomplished by the international exchange of dance.*

Dancer You Will Know

Photo : Robert Belton

KENNETH BANNERMAN

BORN in Haddington, East Lothian. First teacher was Marjorie Middleton of Edinburgh. First performed in public with the Comedie Française at the Edinburgh Festival and with various Scottish companies. Joined the Ramber School in 1957 and the Company a year later.
Creations: Foreman in Hazaña; *Soloist in* La Reja; *Soloist in* The Wise Monkeys. *Rôles: James in* La Sylphide; *Albrecht and Peasant* pas de deux *in* Giselle; *Frantz in* Coppélia; *Poet in* Les Sylphides; *Popular Song in* Façade; *Soloist in* Dark Elegies; *Soloist in* Lilac Garden; *Soloist in* Simple Symphony; *St. Leon in* Pas des Deesses; *Lead in* Winter Night; *Soloist in* Laiderette; *Lead in* Variations on a Theme.

WHEN last year Kenneth Bannerman contributed a small paragraph to the history of ballet by becoming the first Scottish dancer ever to dance ballet's most famous Scotsman, James in *La Sylphide,* it seemed hardly possible that this was the same boy who, retiring and diffident, had started to walk on for the Ballet Rambert only two or three years previously.

As he is now the senior male classical dancer of the company, dancing in addition to James, Albrecht in *Giselle* and Frantz in *Coppélia,* it may be true that his technique is not strong enough for such a position. However, he is an able and considerate partner, he has considerable powers of characterisation which are still developing, and his classical technique has improved markedly over the past few years. (He now, for example, gives a very good account of himself in one of the *divertissement* variations in the first act of *La Sylphide.)*

With a fine physique, and an enviable *ballon,* there is a certain supple quality to his dancing that bodes well for his future. He has all the intelligence one expects from a Rambert soloist. What he now needs is a more sharply accented brilliance to make him the male equivalent of Rambert's Lucette Aldous.

The Bones of Ballet

in recent books

Anatomy and Ballet, by Celia Sparger (Black, 16*s.*).

A REVISED edition of this handbook contains an expanded section of Questions and Answers — all touching upon problems that may occur in any group of students. The main text is still a précis of that basic anatomical knowledge which every teacher should have. The author insists that dance tuition during many centuries has created its own code of sensibility. While teachers and dancers were never students of anatomy, they acquired that special sense of musculature, and the forces that co-ordinate it, by direct experience. But now so much ballet is taught, and often to young pupils not ideally suited physically for such a training, that the author's plea for a minimum technical understanding of the dancer's anatomy should be accepted by every conscientious teacher.

Even if dancers know their own bodies intuitively, nothing is lost by encouraging them to acquire knowledge of exactly how bone, muscle and ligament act in unison or sensitive opposition to make the body a splendid "machine for dancing". Miss Sparger emphasises the basic importance of absolutely correct placing; the first fact of teaching, in any school, with any type of pupil.

But probably the most valuable "hint" to emerge is the notion that dancing is simply not worth teaching unless every pupil is seen as an individual. Not only do bodies have subtle, *exploitable* differences, but the personality which motivates each body is a subtle and distinct one. Dancing cannot be taught by a code of inflexible rules like arithmetic; its rules must allow for that flexibility essential to the stimulation of each individual's talent. This is why the book is of inestimable value to every sincere teacher.

Eileen Ward

Classical Ballet, Its Style and Technique, by Joan Lawson, A. & C. Black, 25*s.*

THOUGH true, to say that Joan Lawson's new book is the best of its kind would not be much of a compliment, seeing that no other writer has attempted such an ambitious survey embracing dance styles, the rules and principles governing the various steps, and the work of the great ballet-masters and choreographers. At first glance, the work seems eccentric or arbitrary in its outline, and if at times Miss Lawson seems opinionated or determined not to be argued with, I could find no single example where she could be proved categorically wrong. Moreover, even some of her more dogmatic statements add an attractive touch of controversy — but then, as she says, it is better to have rules to break rather than no rules at all if chaos is not to reign on stage and in the classrooms.

Her sources can scarcely be questioned, including as they do information gleaned over the years from Vaganova, Cecchetti, Harald Lander, Bocharnikova, Ashton, Mary Skeaping, Fokine, Cranko, MacMillan, Celia Sparger, P. J. S. Richardson and many other specialist authorities. How else can I judge such a comprehensive work, but consult the index and then refer to the subjects on which I consider, with my usual immodesty, myself an expert? If the author and I are in agreement, it then seems obviously safe to take her word on matters on which I know little.

Only at the eleventh hour have we realised that much of our dance history may be lost without a trace, and rash would be the critic or teacher who could claim to sort out and identify the various distinguishing features from the labyrinthine subject of schools of dance. How much, for example, of the so-called pure French school exists today in the work of French dancers and choreographers? Precious little, in fact.

Dance lovers should therefore be deeply indebted to Joan Lawson for undertaking this kind of enthusiastic research and collation. Her remarkable aptitude for creating word pictures of steps and pieces of choreography provides one of the book's best features. This is, in short, the work of a writer who knows her subject inside out, and almost every danced aspect of ballet is touched upon. As the treatment, moreover, is by no means exclusively technical it should give as much pleasure to addicts as to dancers and teachers.

Peter Revitt's illustrations vary from the crude to the brilliant — that depicting the puzzling *ecarté* position as seen from above is strikingly inventive.

E. C. M.

The Mastery of Movement, by Rudolf Laban (Macdonald & Evans, 30*s.*).

THE Mastery of Movement has now come to be accepted as the standard work on Laban's conception of human movement. It is a book which embodies the practical studies and experience of a lifetime devoted to the ever-fascinating phenomenon of movement, and the author's research goes very far outside the usual field of other published works. It has been out of print for some years, but prior to his death Laban was engaged on a new version. In this edition, which has been assembled by Lisa Ullmann, the treatment is broader and less complex in its terminology, though the general approach is the same, exploring as it does the profound interrelation between the inner motivation of movement and the outer functioning of the body. Although some of the principles require much explanation, the work is an inspiring and lasting contribution to the psychology of movement and the laws underlying movement expression. Mention too must be made of the abundance of clearly designed charts. **E. C. M.**

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

THE ROYAL BALLET

at Covent Garden

Last Words on the Beauty

LAST month I wrote about four of the Royal Ballet's current Auroras and Florimunds; on May 13, the last *Sleeping Beauty* of the season, I caught up with the fifth pair, Svetlana Beriosova and Donald MacLeary. Both of them have had an unusually successful season, and this performance found them at the top of their form. Beriosova is continuing to advance as a ballerina, acquiring more and more common but not so Garden allure, and projecting her personality with more certainty. Her dancing with its ecstatic line and exquisite placing is nowadays almost heartbreaking in its beauty. Her fellow-ballerina Nerina apart (who is, incidentally, a completely different type of dancer), Beriosova has now opened up a most encouraging gulf between herself and the rest of the company. These two are now out alone in the way ballerinas should be, and when the time comes for Fonteyn either to dance less or retire, her empire will be in good hands, even though divided. MacLeary seems to have spent the entire season making up his losses in affectations with his gains in technique, and the result is a vastly improved dancer.

The current trio of Lilac Fairies, Deanne Bergsma, Vyvyan Lorrayne and Georgina Parkinson, are as promising as they are commendable. None of them has yet completely fulfilled her potentiality, although all of them are already giving notable performances. Perhaps the best this season has been Parkinson, who has on some occasions given the variation with a breath-catching sense of style. Her manner, however, needs a little more warmth, while she does not always sustain her dancing to the end of the variation. Bergsma, long-limbed and gracious, has a big, charming personality, and dances brilliantly in a sweeping rather than lyrical style. She needs to watch details. Lorrayne has never, to my mind, quite equalled the promise of her début performance. Her acting has a very English charm, that seems a little too small-scale for the Opera House.

Bluebirds this season have included Annette Page, Merle Park, Antoinette Sibley with either Brian Shaw (who migrated early this Spring) and Graham Usher. Sibley was easily the best of the girls, and indeed was quite possibly the best Bluebird we have had since the exotic eloquence of our never-to-be-forgotten Violetta Elvin. Technically Sibley's performance seemed impeccable, and there was a sort of high-strung vibrancy to her dancing giving it a nobly flashing quality. One small point, she still uses her smile in this rôle a shade indiscriminately, and she could perhaps vary it for highlight and accent. Page repeated her admirable performance of last season, showing a crisp delicacy only marred by an occasional jarring angularity. Park made a lyrical Bluebird, a little blurred in its definition, yet having the promise of potential eloquence. At the moment her dancing is not progressing as fast as it should, but this is presumably one of those temporary halts that come in the career of every dancer.

Shaw's first Bluebird of the season proved a trifle disappointing (it was noticeable how much the company's tiredness after America was reflected in the slightly sub-standard performances of so many of its principals), but Shaw can still be, and was, very good, even when disappointing. Usher has a rare brilliance together with a perfect classic line unusual in a male dancer. So much of what he does is exciting that it seems hard to pick on details, but his general finish is not always faultless (and his kind of dancing should be), and personally I disliked his jack-knife version of the *temps de poissons.* However, if I thought it was exaggerated and ugly, clearly the audience thought otherwise, and the audience may be right. His partnering was superb, and he handled his aviary with the distinctive ease of a Blair or MacLeary.

On May 9 the Royal Ballet unexpectedly acquired a new, or more accurately a newish, Bluebird in the stalwart person of Bryan Lawrence. The performance in question was a semi-State gala in honour of the President of Finland and his wife. Originally it should have marked John Gilpin's Covent Garden début in the rôle, but the injury which threw such a shadow over recent Covent Garden casting necessitated his replacement by Usher. Unfortunately the over-worked Usher had to withdraw during the actual course of the performance with a severe migraine, so Lawrence, who had not danced the rôle since his early days with the Theatre Ballet, had to take over at almost literally the traditional moment's notice. Most deplorably no announcement of any kind was made by the management, which was equally unfair to Lawrence, Usher and the audience. Sir David Webster and his colleagues may not realise it, but it is often in what doubtless seem to them to be trifling inefficiencies, that managements are judged. This kind of amateurism would hardly be conceivable in any other theatre.

Although I missed this secret début, I saw Lawrence dance Bluebird on the following Saturday, when wonder of wonders his name was actually *printed* on the programme. It was a most promising performance. He looked splendid in the costume, better, in fact, than anyone I can recall. His dancing proved strong rather than brilliant, but it remained by any standards a good performance that will clearly improve with experience. Most of his dancing was impeccable, but he must learn to point his feet better, especially in *brisés volés*. He is a dancer who appears to deserve every opportunity and encouragement, and it seems only surprising that more do not come his way.

A few words must suffice for the rest. New appointments among the Fairies this season have included Parkinson as Crystal Fountain, Christine Beckley as Enchanted Garden, Sibley and Monica Mason as Woodland Glades, Sibley and Mavis Osborn as Song Birds and Pamela Moncur as the Golden Vine, in addition to these rôles' more usual incumbents. The *divertissements* in the last act were moderately well danced, although we still lack someone who can bring the same touch of distinction to Florestan as MacMillan did about ten years ago. (It is curious that Bryan Lawrence, accomplished and brilliant, somehow contrives to make nothing like his full effect in this rôle. Yet his promise is self-evident in the *corps*, and his ability to sustain the big occasion was amply proved when he danced Siegfried at last year's School performance.) Both Alexander Grant, and newcomer Keith Milland, led the Three Ivans with boisterous vigour. Among the rest Leslie Edwards as Catalabutte and Derek Rencher were outstanding among the all too lay figures. But the only person who really seems to have some idea of what an exciting ballet this could be if it were produced with a greater degree of dramatic conviction is Ray Powell, who goes from strength to strength as the fantastically vicious and malevolent Carabosse. **C. B.**

Classic Ending

THE Royal Ballet's last performances before the Russian campaign were given over entirely to the full-length classics. Well, not entirely, because no one in their right mind could call *Giselle* full-length, even if now it has been promoted to full-evening. On June 2, Anya Linden made her first appearance in the Royal Ballet's recent refurbishment of *Giselle*, partnered by David Blair — an evening which must have been particularly jolly for those in the audience who had booked to see Linden and Gilpin in *The Sleeping Beauty*. (For this, even I do not blame the long-suffering management, as *force majeure* can happen to anyone.)

Linden's Giselle has not yet advanced a great deal on her very first performances. Her acting in the first act remains intelligent, poignant and telling. Her dancing, particularly in the second act, still lacks individuality, and she is dangerously fond of breaking up the musical phrases, thus obscuring her natural qualities of technique and line and making her seem almost clumsy.

It was a great pity that Gilpin was unable to make his Covent Garden début as Albrecht at this performance, and it is to be hoped, perhaps even presumed, that when he is fully recovered Covent Garden will invite him back to complete his unfinished business. However, there was considerable solace to be found in David Blair's Albrecht, as Blair seemed to have recovered the peak of his dancing form. After a season in which he has almost always looked just very slightly below his best, this recovery was particularly agreeable coming so close before the company's departure for Russia.

Apart from *Giselle*, the remaining end-of-term performance were given over to *Swan Lake*. The matinée of May 27 saw Annette Page as Odette/Odile and her husband Ronald Hynd as Siegfried for the first (and last) time this season. I think they have both given better performances in this, although the second act *pas de deux* was beautifully danced, with a lovely musical awareness and sensitivity. Page was slightly less effective on her own, and although Hynd produced his usual, good clean *jetés* in the Black Swan *pas de deux*, this bravura choreography shows his technique to its least advantage. The intelligence and good taste that runs through all their classic interpretations was, of course, present, and Hynd's acting and the sheer theatricality of his personality are always worth watching. In the *pas de trois* with the fluent Graham Usher, Pamela Moncur danced neatly, yet tended to over-project her manner, while Georgina Parkinson, looking radiant, seemed too gauche and tentative. Christopher Newton and particularly Deanne Bergsma, both leading the *pas de six* for the first time at Covent Garden, gave a lively impression. Georgina Parkinson and Graham Usher made a conscientious attempt at the Neapolitan Dance but lacked the naturally mercurial lightness this character *pas de deux* demands.

It was *Swan Lake* that was chosen to end the season on June 3, and the company seemed to forget their tiredness, to give a stunning performance. Of course, it is a pity that the Royal Ballet had to go to Russia after over a year's gruelling work, including a dollar-grubbing tour of America, and it is even more a pity that the Russians can't first see the company as it was one or two years ago when it had reached a summit not likely to be reascended for a year or so now. Nevertheless, if they dance as they did on the last night of the season I cannot see how the Russians can fail to love them.

Svetlana Beriosova danced beautifully, with her third act having perhaps more certainty than before. MacLeary set the seal on his recent improvement by topping all his previous performances and bringing an immense *panache* to his dancing that had previously been missing.

The rest of the performance, despite its qualities, were shadowed by the fact that it represented Julia Farron's last appearance as a regular member of the company. She received a huge and justified ovation after the Neapolitan Dance. It was a pleasant touch from Beriosova and MacLeary when they, too, during the calls for the Black Swan *pas de deux*, turned round to bow to Farron, thus paying their respect to a great lady of British ballet. Other dancers giving their last performances in London included Jacqueline Daryl, Richard Farley and William Wilson. This is a formidable quartet for any company to lose, and they will all be greatly missed. **C. B.**

THE ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL

IN the past, the annual Covent Garden matinée for showing off the students of the Royal Ballet School has laid emphasis on the classics. Their performance of *Coppélia* and the full-length *Le Lac des Cygnes* were so spirited that it seemed that their more professional betters could learn quite a lot from them, particularly when it comes to reacting to whatever action is taking place on the stage. This year's performance, on May 13, marked a change of policy. The two short ballets — Cranko's *Pineapple Poll* and Ashton's *Les Patineurs* — were chosen so as to give the students a taste of character and *demi-caractere* work, while the Gymnastic Display by teams of boys from the senior and junior school was intended to plant another nail in the coffin of male dancing effeminacy — or that is what Dame Ninette de Valois implied when she made a curtain speech.

Pineapple Poll is one of those light-hearted ballets which are deceptively difficult to dance. In fact the three principal rôles of Poll herself, Captain Belaye and Jasper were originally so bespoke-tailored to the particular qualities of Elaine Fifield, David Blair and David Poole that nobody, in either of the Royal Ballet companies, has ever come to within a spliced main-brace distance of any of them, as far as interpretation is concerned. So the difference between this performance and those other student performances lies in the fact that previously we forgot that we were seeing students whereas here we were conscious of it all the time — and had to make the necessary allowances.

Susan Jones made a creditable attempt at the title rôle but it turns out to be not much of a part unless it is given with polished playing and technical brilliance in the dancing. It amounted to more or less the same thing as an efficient student playing Danilova's Street Dancer in Massine's *Le Beau Danube*. Piers Beaumont as Captain Belaye looked as though he could turn into a fine classical dancer — he beats, jumps and turns excellently and is well placed — but as regard to acting he hasn't much of a clue. All that stylish strutting and the various nuances which so clearly delineate the character of the gallant captain with animal magnetism, entirely escaped Beaumont. Jane Hammond was a suitable simpering Blanche and Moya Knox made a woolly enough Mrs. Dimple, while the dancing from the sweethearts, wives and crew of H.M.S. Hot Cross Bun was of the high standard we have come to expect from these students. I have left until last Keith Martin's Jasper, the pot boy, because it was so clearly the most accomplished performance in the ballet. He had a sort of gormless wistful charm and he never moved out of his particular view of this character. His front-curtain scene

when he collects Poll's discarded garments was far and away the most professional feature of this part of the programme. This boy could become another Poole or Holden provided he is nurtured with the greatest care; there is already a tendency to exaggerate and if this is not kept in check he could become irritating.

But why, oh why, did somebody cook up the horrifying idea of allowing these young dancers to take "character calls"? Not only is it getting them into atrocious habits at an early age but, if this performance was intended to show that male dancers are not effeminate, then the whole thing was killed stone dead from the start owing to this nauseatingly "camp" display.

My feelings about sandwiching a gymnastic display into the middle of this matinée are extremely mixed. As I had always imagined that the whole point of these student displays was to give young dancers the "feel" of a big stage then it seems rather a waste of time to spend one third of the programme doing something that would look far better on the lawn of White Lodge. And although I am wholly in favour of gymnastics being a part of a dancer's curriculum, I begin to wonder whether included to the extent that anything must be in order to give a public display of this kind is not going to overdevelop certain muscles and thus produce a generation of ox-like dancers. Also to see them vaulting over vaulting-horses sent shivers down my spine because I once, at school, damaged my knee on a similar contraption and from that injury I have never recovered. It seems that exposing young and precious (particularly so in the case of the dancer) limbs to this kind of thing is taking an unnecessary risk. Far better would it be for them to swim, fence or play tennis and squash. Nevertheless, George Weedon and Edward Robertson arranged the display extremely well and with a military precision and lack of fuss and with a certain choreographic imagination in the groupings and formations. The boys of the senior and junior school acquitted themselves well, though no better than can be seen in any secondary school end-of-term display. A final assessment of it all is that we are very glad the Royal Ballet School indulges in gymnastics, provided scientific care is taken, but if anybody wants to *pay* for seeing such displays then they had far better go to the Military Tournament. The bare stage with stacked scenery provided the best décor of the afternoon.

In a class apart was the final ballet, Ashton's *Les Patineurs,* and it raised the programme up to the level of previous years. In fact I don't think I have seen such a spirited performance of the ballet since the old pre-war days up at Sadler's Wells. Particularly noteworthy were Hilary Debden and Ann Jenner as the spinning Blue skating girls who could go into the Covent Garden Company immediately if they were needed, while Patricia Kilner and Ann Wade made those less interesting Red girls seem more interesting than usual. At the last moment Derek Rencher had to take over the boy in the "White" *pas de deux* from Nicholas Benton, who was ill. Rencher danced well with Susan Turnham, who appeared to have many ballerina qualities that should be watched for the future. Four boys — Geoffrey Cauley, Paul Brown, Anthony Dowell and David Gale — jumped and turned like well-tried veterans in the *corps.* Dudley Tomlinson, from South Africa, made a bold shot at the Blue Skater but unfortunately failed to efface any memories of anyone else in the rôle. Altogether though, this ballet made an eminently satisfactory finish to a matinée that up to this point had been decidedly below par — and honour was saved!

It is a problem to know what is right for these student displays. In the past we have advocated that it would be a good idea to have works specially created, now I am not so certain. We want to see just how good the up-and-coming students are, and unless we can compare them with their more professional betters, then such assessment is impossible. Possibly the answer lies in giving one creation for students sandwiched between two well-tried works. It might also be a good idea to give two programmes a year — in one of them the students could try their own hand at choreography. This side of a dancer's development has so far been shamefully neglected at the Royal Ballet School, though it is a regular feature of the Cecchetti Society's work. **P. W.**

BALLET RAMBERT REVIVAL: During Ballet Rambert's London season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre they will give a new creation by Norman Morrice, A Place in the Desert, *as well as reviving two of his previous ballets,* Two Brothers *and* Hazaña. *Gillian Martlew and John Chesworth are seen below in an episode from the latter. Photo: John Blomfield.*

BALLETS MINERVA

THE Ballets Minerva could well advertise itself "go anywhere, dance anything". The arm of ballet is lengthening! Directed by Edward Gaillard, a Barnum of the village halls, one month it is gracing schools and institutes in Cornwall, the next it is nomading it in Northumberland. I saw the troupe at the Nesta Brooking Studio last month prior to its summer season in the London parks. Its programme, which strives to avoid such inessentials as name of composer or choreographer and which features enough misprints to keep one busy proof-correcting the entire interval, shows that it dances most of the classics, albeit in digest form. I should very much like to inspect their *Giselle,* Act 2, with its four Wilis. But for a company which has to endure the ups and downs of innumerable one-night stands and audiences probably composed of old ladies and children, standards are very much higher than one should dare to expect.

The mode of presentation is excellent — a hall being divided into three parts with the audience at one end, a good stage erected at the other, and a sensible gulf separating the two. The ballets are all well lit and, even by metropolitan standards, most tastefully costumed. Wisely the company gets its worst ballet over first — a Massinian tussle between good and evil in black and white with a red spot for Sin (or was she Temptation?) — with the cast of six compelled to reel about impersonating a cast of 20 in a multiplicity of entrances and exits. The children's ballet, *The Ugly Duckling,* was good of its kind, as was the Gounod *Romantic Suite.* But the company's own variant of *Gala Performance, Diana's Mythtake,* with pretty Degas costumes, showed the dancers at their best in comedy, despite a tendency to over-emphasize the points. In this, Kathleen Gray, as an indestructible ballerina with a poisonous leer and an addiction to bestowing kisses, showed a flair for comedy, while in other works Suzanne Sarova and Margaret Cameron showed charming personalities and fairly accomp-

lished techniques. I would, however, like to see eye make-ups tidied — at least two of the principals appeared to be wearing fringed spectacles. **E. C. M.**

ASSOCIATION OF BALLET CLUBS

THE Association of Ballet Clubs, which gave its annual performance at the Rudolf Steiner Theatre on May 20, is in no position to impose higher performing standards on its members. Were it to insist that the hopelessly incompetent amateurs should not perform, many clubs would find their memberships reduced and ballets with casts of five would be staged, rather than those which have to find room for every member of the group. I know how difficult it is to create comedy ballets, but I do wish that the Association would not present extracts from the classics as substitutes for laughs. The *Swan Lake* Act II *pas de deux* provided by two dancers of Janet Cranmore's Birmingham Ballet Theatre was not dull, and it is doubtful whether anyone could have made it more entertaining, except perhaps artists from the Crazy Gang. But somehow an Odette, stocky, without extensions, and, worse, near dead with fright, partnered by a spindly Siegfried, seemed incompatible with Ivanov's choreography.

Janet Sinclair arranged a craftsmanlike digest version of *Tristan and Isolde* for the Harlow Club. It was well rehearsed, attractively danced, and reminiscent of Andrée Howard's style, though some of its plot seemed to have got lost in transit. Maria Zybina arranged a cheerful Croatian folk-ballet for the Lewisham Club — *Svatovac* — to a medley of tunes from Lhotka's *Devil in the Village* and Baranovic's *Gingerbread Heart.* The Birmingham Club danced Janet Cranmore's *Concertante* (Schumann). Its choreography was classroom classical antics, terribly busy, badly danced from beginning to end, with shoe-ribbons not even tied properly. Going by the programme one of the cavaliers seemed to have dropped out. This seemed even more certain when one girl who had no partner looked green with envy at others having their *arabesques* supported.

Nina Hubbard's Cambridge Club again produced the best work, though I did not like her *Ballet en Blanc.* Smetana's *Vltava* has too many nationalistic overtones for an anonymous type of romantic classical work in white, flowing costumes. But her *Skazka* (Rimsky-Korsakov), a reworking of the *Beauty and the Beast* fable, proved to be the type of work that would have delighted the late Doris Humphrey. Nina Hubbard is interested in spatial effects, silhouettes, movement dynamics and ingenious floor patterns. Her dancers can become scenery by obscuring themselves in voluminous cloaks, her steps are basically simple, and her poses suitable for her various characters. She is thus able to create an expressive work that is visually attractive on a shoestring budget. An organisation such as the Sunday Ballet Club could well consider inviting her to compose a ballet for professional dancers.

E. C. M.

THE KUMAR SISTERS: Kamala and Radha Kumar, who together with other members of their family gave recitals of Indian dance at the Scala Theatre, London. One programme consisted of a display of the classical Bharatha Natyam and Kathak schools of dance, another of Indian folk dance. Kamala Kumar showed that she is an exceptionally fine exponent of the Bharatha Natyam school, particularly when she danced Dasavathara Varnam, *the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu.*

DANISH FESTIVAL

Continued from page 11

Stockholm — with a very similar plot development — Ingmar Bergman traces the thread so clearly in his sequence of scenes. In a ballet, unaided by a libretto, concise thematic structure is absolutely necessary. This is Birgit Cullberg's achievement.

Cullberg's *Miss Julie* and *The Moon Reindeer* received immaculate productions, although the company's built-in elegance sometimes waters down the primitive mood of her ballets. But it was an astonishing experience to behold the Danish men leaping against the Nordic sky in *The Moon Reindeer.* Mona Vangsaa and Henning Kronstam were the unhappy protagonists in this Lapp legend.

Erik Bruhn's major contribution to the festival was his mere presence (as guest) on the Royal Theatre stage —as one of the world's principal male dancers. He also restaged *Giselle* for the Danes this past season. He created a strong second act, with the Wilis functioning as a collective, dynamic force while carrying out the commands of their cool queen, Kirsten Ralov. And Henning Kronstam stole the show — with three consecutive double *tours en l'air,* each of them distorted in despair, yet technically perfect, as he pleaded with Myrtha. The first act was surprisingly thin, devoid of the splendid mime scenes which the Danes could easily master. Erik Bruhn will appear with the Bolshoi for several months next season — setting up a new standard there for male dancing — and one hopes he will return from Moscow imbued with fresh ideas for *Giselle.* Margrethe Schanne danced admirably in the title rôle, but only skimmed the surface of the tragedy.

If the international classics are to be shown in Copenhagen, and they certainly should be, the full-length *Swan Lake* and a revival of their *Sleeping Beauty* would be valuable assets — as works of beauty and as stage classrooms — and *Chopiniana (Les Sylphides)* should be revived permanently. No one can dance the Fokine gem like the Danes.

The company still lacks a ballerina, though a number of gifted misses seem likely candidates. The fulfilled promise of blonde Kirsten Simone is long overdue. In the bravura *pas de deux* of *Nutcracker* and *Don Quixote,* she showed the virtuosity and classical lines of a ballerina, with the arms of a goddess, but she still lacks poise, continuous lyricism, and any apparent conception of what she's creating. In her *Don Quixote* variation, she snapped open her fan with zest, and then bubbled through the steps as though she were still the Sugar Plum Fairy. And except for the artless Roxane, the dramatic rôles seem to have no meaning for her. These are harsh words about a lovely young dancer, but Kirsten Simone should have arrived by now. Near the top also are Kirsten Petersen and Hanne Marie Ravn, both on leave during the festival. Tiny Solveig Ostergaard, a bright hope in 1958, is still a bright hope; but her bouncing head and undisciplined arms will limit her to the soubrette rôles — the minor ones — until she awakens to her own potential. Marianne Walther and Anna Laerkesen (a dream in the classical *pas de deux* of *Graduation Ball)* are glowing young hopefuls, who must be challenged now to test their strengths. Life goes too easily for these young Danes. It is ridiculous that the best Miss Julie this ballet-goer has seen is the Danish Toni Lander, a true ballerina — not in Copenhagen, but with American Ballet Theatre.

Nevertheless — despite problems with repertoire and ballerinas — a visit to the examinations of the Royal Danish Ballet school confirmed the hope that this company will flourish at least another 213 years. Of the six *ballet aspirants* whose trials climaxed the serious procedure, four were promoted into the company — Vivi Gelker, Anne Mickelsen, Nina Segar and Benny Poulsen. The keen-eyed critic of Oslo's *Morgenbladet,* Erik Pierstorff, immediately arranged a contract for one of the losing boys to join the Norwegian Ballet. Such is the calibre of Denmark's dancers.

FRANCE

THE THEATRE DES NATIONS

THROUGHOUT May, the Théâtre des Nations devoted its programmes to folklore. Following the happy policy of the past four years, dancers have been successively welcomed from all parts of the world. Delayed by recent political events, the National Song and Dance Ensemble of Cuba appeared on April 28, but had to move the next day to the Théâtre de l'Etoile, where they stayed until May 10. Their well-intended programmes were full of revolutionary ambitions: their avowed aim was a search for a faithful reproduction of their past, with all false influences erased. The company appealed more for its fiery spirits than by any general technical mastery. But the African influences, both modern and even classical, that made themselves obvious time and time again in the choreography of Ramiro Guerra proved to be insufficiently harmonised to make a coherent spectacle.

On April 29, the Al-Anwar troupe showed the Paris public a Lebanon in which Turkish influences were predominant. The style of their dances — a long chain of interlaced dancers with the two principals waving handkerchiefs, the stamping, and the rather lascivious movements of the women — are recognisable in various forms on all the Oriental shores of the Mediterranean, in Greece and also in Bulgaria. Danced with discipline and with perfect teamwork, the changing patterns were simple but harmonious. They evoked the rhythm of the seasons, the work of the field labourers, but triumphed above all in the *Dabkes*, a collection of national dances given by 75 performers. The massed groupings produced a certain effect which the Soviet ensembles are no longer unique in using. For the girls, the most interesting item was the Snow Dance during which they gently glided and interlaced like snowflakes, reminding us, however modestly, of that remarkable Russian ensemble, the Beryozka.

NATIONAL FOLKLORE COMPANY OF MEXICO (above and below): This company, new to Europe, had such a success at the Théâtre des Nations that they moved to another theatre after their scheduled season. Their programme is very varied, showing, as it does, different phases of Mexican life and folklore. Photos: Lido.

On May 3, the National Ensemble of Madagascar made its début, and from the start their simplicity and charm were obvious. The items called upon very different traditions for their inspiration. While, on the one hand, we could detect the soft nonchalance of Oceania, in other items, the frenzy and exuberance of the much nearer Africa were more evident. As usual, much was made of the native occupations, the work in the fields and the various seasons, while witchcraft, exhumations and circumcision ceremonies also provided effects more savage and more appropriate for Equatorial Africa. To the accompaniment of various instruments, mostly beaten or scratched, the Madagascans proved able to sing dream-like lullabies which added to the leisurely charm of their programme. Here the softness and carefree naïvety proved to be their most pleasing attributes and ones capable of disarming all criticism. Finally, we must also praise the vivid floral patterned costumes and the harmonious native headdresses.

But with the National Folklore Company of Mexico on May 8 the atmosphere changed abruptly. The primitive colours of the *quetzales* and the white skirts of the Guacamaya dancers stood out against black drapes. Resembling the changing pictures of a giant kaleidoscope, all the successive periods of Mexican civilisation were briefly recalled; Aztec ceremonies, dancers of the aboriginal Yaqis tribe, polkas of the period of the 1910 revolution, and the hammering of the Spanish *zapateado*.

Finally, on May 12, the Niger National Ensemble appeared. In the style of its predecessors, the Ivory Coast and Senegalese companies, this very young troupe is composed of strikingly distinct ethnic groups. Geography places the Niger within reach of the extremes of Islam and Dahomey, intermingling black and white racial influences. The spectator can thus see first the invulnerable warriors of Massalata who, shouting loudly, do not hesitate to pass their sword blades across their bodies and foreheads, and then the dances of the young Ader villagers, which feature sinuous hip movements. A short fire dance is followed by a little legendary drama dedicated to the savage chief, Kabrin Kabra, which has some interest as an exotic tableau. The somewhat monotonous blacksmith dances are outshone by the Touareg battle dances, with warriors, veiled in blue, striking the resonant shields of their opponents. The Beri-Beri presents a rare example of a *pas de deux* — something exceptional in an Islamic country. Of all such spectacles, whether they be more or less authentic, better or lesser known, these folk-dance ensembles show

the importance of dance as a religious, social or recreational pastime of the people.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ON May 15, M. Julien gave a cocktail party in the Foyer de la Danse at the Opéra in honour of the Kirov Company. Present with the Leningrad principals were Claude Bessy, Claire Motte, Madeleine Lafon, Christiane Vaussard, Jean-Paul Andréani, Youly Algaroff, Attilio Labis, Max Bozzoni and George Skibine.

FOR the first time, the town of Versailles is organising a festival. For this Yvette Chauviré and George Skibine have lent their support to the production of Racine's tragedy, *Esther,* which will be staged by the Marie Bell Company.

THE National Ensemble of Katanga has just given a series of performances at the Théâtre de l'Etoile.

Marie-Françoise Christout.

AMERICA

JAMAICAN DANCERS IN WASHINGTON

A FRESH and unusual inter-cultural exchange programme between a British Colony, Jamaica, and the United States, took place recently in our nation's capital, when the Jamaica Company of Dancers and Singers presented "Sun Over the West Indies", with choreography by Ivy Baxter, at Crampton Auditorium of Howard University. This event was sponsored by the Howard University Faculty Women's Club in co-operation with the Department of Physical Education for Women and the Liberal Arts Student Council. These performances, which drew capacity audiences and were hailed by the Washington press, were for the benefit of the Howard University Scholarship Fund.

Aside from the fresh impact of this entire company, it must be added that there was strong interest in two featured artists, Clive Thompson and Edward Thomas, guests with the group with whom they have both worked in the past and who are now members of Martha Graham's company and are currently at her school. (As reported in our June issue, these two Jamaican dancers were a notable addition to the Graham season.)

Ivy Baxter, Founder-Creator and Choreographer of much that is notable in dance presentation today in Jamaica, obviously has played an enormous rôle in bringing recognition to Jamaican dance. In a programme note, she states, "We are a mixture of all the races of the world, set in one place. We are, as it were, variations of the basic theme of Africa played upon by the races of Europe and Asia. . . . We, in the British Caribbean, have been influenced by Britain to a great extent in our cultural patterns, and this has shaped our ends up to this point of development."

One hopes that next time this company journeys to America they will be seen in New York, where a warm welcome awaits them.

BOSTON ARTS FESTIVAL

DURING mid-June, the Boston Arts Festival presented "America Dances" as an anniversary feature marking the Festival's tenth anniversary. This panorama of American dance was based upon a written treatment by Walter Terry, dance critic of the *New York Herald-Tribune,* and played before an estimated audience

AL-ANWAR FROM THE LEBANON (above) · Dancers from the Lebanese company which appeared at the Théâtre des Nations. Their perfect teamwork and discipline was at its best in the Debkes, *the national dances of their country.* *Photo : Lido.*

NEW BALLET THEATRE STAR (below) : Sallie Wilson, who for several years has shown promise of future potential, has recently been appointed to ballerina status with American Ballet Theatre. *Photo : Jack Mitchell.*

of 15,000 nightly for six evenings in the Boston Public Garden. Ruth St. Denis, America's First Lady of Dance, performed her historic solo dance, "Incense," first created in 1906. Other participants included Maria Tallchief, Edward Villella, Alvin Ailey and his Dance Company with Carmen de Lavallade as guest dancer, Mia Slavenska, Francisco Moncion, and with Maria Karnilova and Donald Saddler re-creating some of the ballroom dances of Vernon and Irene Castle.

GALA FESTIVAL AT JACOB'S PILLOW

CELEBRATING Ted Shawn's 50th year as a performer and the 20th year of the Ted Shawn Theatre at Jacob's Pillow (actually, there have been 29 years of performances on the premises, but only during the past 20 have they been held in this perfectly proportioned dance theatre), a gala nine-week festival has been planned. Starting on July 4, the first programme will feature Ruth St. Denis, Mia Slavenska and George Zoritch, Norman Walker and Company and Lotte Goslar; the second week will alternate four performances of Maria Tallchief and Erik Bruhn and four by Lupe Serrano and Royes Fernandez, with Jean Cebron, Teokila A'Asa and Nala Najan and Sasha; the third week will again feature four performances each by Tallchief-Bruhn and Serrano-Fernandez in *pas de deux* on the same programme with Alvin Ailey and the Alvin Ailey Dance Company with Carmen de Lavallade as guest star; the fourth week features Kenneth Johnson, Patricia Klkovic and Orrin Kayan in *Three's a Crowd* (choreographed by Ruth Page), Pauline Koner and Carola Goya and Matteo; the fifth week highlights Myra Kinch and her Company with Ted Shawn in *A Waltz is a Waltz is a Waltz* and Jean Leon Destine and his company of Haitian dancers. The sixth and seventh weeks will be devoted to two full programmes of Ten Young Danes (from the Royal Danish Ballet) with Inge Sand as guest artist. The eighth week features Patricia Wilde partnered by Edward Villella, Alonzo Rivera, Deborah Zall and Co., and Carlos de la Camaara and Myrna. The closing week will include Ruth Ann Koesun and Ivan Allen, Hadassah, and the Jacob's Pillow Dancers in two new works choreographed by Nel Roos.

FRANKLIN JOINS BALLET THEATRE

IN a much-needed move, Lucia Chase and Oliver Smith, co-directors of American Ballet Theatre, have appointed Mr. Frederic Franklin as Production Assistant to Miss Chase. Franklin, who recently resigned from the Washington Ballet, which he brought to national prominence, was born in England and came to the United States in 1938 and was long associated with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, first as Premier Danseur and, in later years, as Ballet Master. Now that Franklin is a participating member in the direction and artistic management of American Ballet Theatre, it is more than likely that the company will have the powerful artistic supervision it has so long needed. In addition to this major policy change, American Ballet Theatre has also elevated the delicious Sallie Wilson, who made such a marked impression during the recent New York season, to the rank of ballerina. Ivan Allen has also been advanced to the position of one of the principal male dancers.

As we go to press, it appears more than likely that Scott Douglas and Glen Tetley, now in Europe with Jerome Rabbins' "Ballets: U.S.A.", will not rejoin American Ballet Theatre in time for its planned autumn New York season at the Broadway Theatre. One feature of this season, which will be playing simultaneously to that of the Leningrad Ballet and the New York City Ballet, will be the première in America of Harald Lander's *Etudes.*

ROBBINS COMPANY TO RUSSIA ?

AS we go to press, it appears more than likely that Jerome Robbins' "Ballets: U.S.A." will extend their European tour and play some engagements in Russia before they return to America in early November.

SYBIL SHEARER: The famous American Modern Dancer in her Fables and Proverbs, *a recital which recently had a great success in Chicago.*
Photo: Helen Morrison.

MOISEYEV DANCERS THIRD RETURN TO N. Y.

DUE to public demand, impresario Sol Hurok returned the Moiseyev Dance Company to Madison Square Garden in mid-May for another series of sold-out performances. After their cross-country tour, they appear there again this month (July 6 through to 8) for four more performances before flying home. This final

(Photo Douglas Elston)
Dancers from this studio now appearing in the West End and foremost Spanish Ballet Companies.

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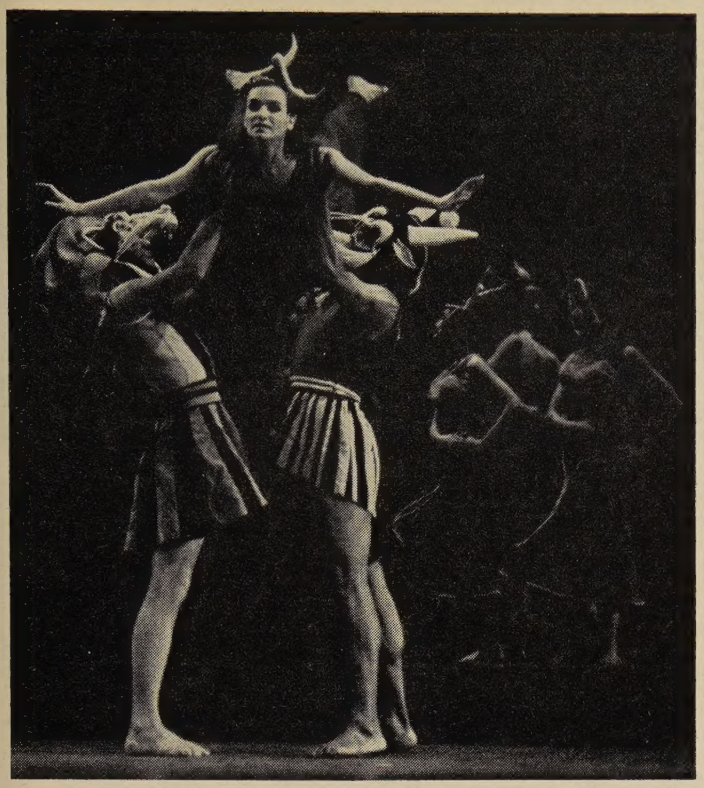

JEAN ERDMAN'S WORKS · Left, Mark Ryder, Jean Erdman and Donald McKayle in Erdman's Solstice *with Carlus Dyer masks. Right, Jean Erdman in her* Fearful Symmetry *against a sculpture by Carlus Dyer. Photos : Harold Swahn.*

programme includes works from both the 1958 and 1961 season with the following being revived from their first visit: *City Quadrille, The Moldavian Suite, Zhok, The Suite of Old Russian Dances, Yurochka,* a Byelorussian dance, *Bul'ba,* and the sensational *Gopak.* Interestingly enough, this large company comes across in huge Madison Square Garden just as well as it does at the Met., and, in consequence, some 150,000 New Yorkers viewed them during their first two engagements in April and May and their final performances will bring the mark well over 200,000.

JEAN ERDMAN'S N. Y. CONCERT

JEAN ERDMAN, a former soloist with Martha Graham, is rapidly developing into one of the most lyric of our younger dancers. Her recent concert at Hunter College gave ample indication of this, especially in *Solstice,* an older work but new to this observer. In it she was handsomely partnered by Mark Ryder and Donald McKayle.

SYBIL SHEARER, A DANCER'S DANCER

AT the height of the New York City dance season last Spring, Sybil Shearer, dancer-choreographer, presented a series of concerts at the Winnetka Community Theatre, a suburb of Chicago, that won critical superlatives, even from Claudia Cassidy, one of the most "critical" of American dance critics. The programme had the overall title *Fables and Proverbs.* Speaking of one section, Claudia Cassidy claimed, "But when she moves there is no doubt. This is a resistant element heavier than air, a mysterious element more primal than a shell, even of the seas. It is the sea itself, the whole great sweep of it, and that you know it for what it is instant, irrevocably and magically. . . . She called it 'In the shell is the sound of the sea', and it stood alone at the crest of her gift, which is a form of witchery."

Since Sybil Shearer is one of the most disciplined and evocative of our younger generation of dancers, New York audiences may only fretfully wish that she would journey East to visit us more often. Certainly her divine simplicity would have been most welcome at the height of our hectic Spring season in New York.

HIGH SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS

THE Dance Department, headed by Dr. Rachel Yocom, of New York City's High School of Performing Arts, presented four performances of its annual concert at Hunter College Playhouse with Stuart Hodes' *Simon Says,* David Wood's *Danza,* Norman Walker's *Cowboy in Black* and *Cantos* featured prominently on a programme presenting these young students in a variety of classical and contemporary dance works.

SUMMER GUEST APPEARANCES

IN addition to appearing at Jacob's Pillow, Maria Tallchief and Erik Bruhn and Lupe Serrano, partnered by Royes Fernandez, will be busy elsewhere on the summer dance circuit as well. Tallchief and Bruhn performed with the André Eglevsky Festival Ballet at Lewisohn Stadium, New York City, in *pas de deux* from *Don Quixote, Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty* during the two performances of this company's engagement. They also appear for a week early this month as guests at the Carter Barron Ampitheatre in Washington, D.C. Meanwhile, Lupe Serrano and Royes Fernandez have appeared as soloists in *Song of Norway* at Dallas, and in *The Great Waltz* in Kansas City.

NEWS IN BRIEF

DANCER - director - choreographer Bob Fosse has scored a great hit in the New York City Center's revival of *Pal Joey,* where he just acts and dances superbly. Always a marvellous performer, it's exciting to see him back on stage once more between his usual stints as choreographer-director.

DANCER-choreographer Talley Beatty has staged all the movement scenes for the sensational off-Broadway presentation of Jean Genet's *The Blacks.*

Arthur Todd.

WESTERN THEATRE BALLET

Continued from page 18

the company's performance of Darrell's *Chiaroscuro* at the last Sunday Ballet Club, I was pleased to find it restored to its full effectiveness in the second of the week's programmes. Sylvia Wellman, Peter Cazalet and Max Natiez were all new to me in the ballet, and they fitted in well with what Darrell calls his "dance impressions of light and shade in human behaviour", which has always seemed to me to be more shady than light.

Although I find myself liking *Chiaroscuro* more and more, I find myself liking Béjart's *Sonate à Trois* less and less. For the life of me I have never really discovered the precise meaning of this reader's digest balleticisation of Sartre's *Huit Clos.* Brenda Last was new to me in the rôle of the Girl, but it does not seem to be a part to show her at her best. In any event, this ballet for me will always be a lot of tension in search of an emotion. I do hope Béjart never tries to make a ballet out of *Altona.*

The programme ended with a spanking performance of Ray Powell's *One in Five,* danced by Merry, Griffith, Natiez, Cazalet and Symons. The four boys all danced well and presented strongly contrasted characters. Hazel Merry was pure bliss as the girl. It made an excellent end to the evening, even though the muddle of backstage props that provides the settings needs to be arranged with more art and less matter.

GRADUATION BALL

Continued from page 27

and the Impromptu Dance was given to Mette Mollerup. For this production the "Night in Venice" *pas de deux* was, for obvious reasons, substituted for "La Sylphide and the Scotsman" and a completely new variation for a *danseur noble* was inserted for Borge Ralov. (After Ralov's retirement this dance was omitted from the production).

In 1957 Lichine produced the ballet twice. The first of these productions was for the Nederlands Ballet and was given on March 29 in The Hague. This had new décor and costumes by Wim Vesseur and the Leading Cadet was danced by Jaap Flier, with the Leading Junior Girl by Marianne Hilarides, the Headmistress was taken by Hannie van Leeuwen, and the General by Aart Verstagen. The Drummer was Conrad van der Wetering, the Impromptu Dance, Linda Manez, the Dance Step Competition was doubled by Manez and Hilarides (the latter being replaced in the Perpetuum Mobile) and the Sylphide and the Scotsman were danced by Irene de Vos and Toer van Schayk.

When London's Festival Ballet reproduced *Graduation Ball,* first given in Paris on May 6, 1957, they enlisted the assistance of Benois himself to re-create his original designs. The cast included Keith Beckett and Anita Landa as the Leading Cadet and the Leading Junior Girl, Flemming Flindt as the Drummer, Margit Muller in the Impromptu Dance, Estelle Nova and Jennifer Alderton in the Dance Step Competition, Janet Overton as the Headmistress and Peter White as the General. For this production Lichine revived the "La Sylphide and the Scotsman" *pas de deux,* and it was danced by Pamela Hart and Jean-Pierre Alban. This production was first given in London at the Royal Festival Hall on July 9, 1957, with the same cast.

Graduation Ball, like one or two other examples of the same *genre,* is a ballet easily under-rated for the simplest and most obvious of reasons. The people who always rate ballets, be they dancers, critics or critical members of the audience, are those who, either by profession, inclination, or both, see the same ballets time and time again. Consequently this most influential section of the audience, the regular balletgoers and critics, tend to place an almost exaggerated importance upon a ballet's durability. A ballet's ability to endure being seen any number of times and still to come up fresh, is undoubtedly a most important quality. But it may be a quality in which an otherwise commendable ballet is partially deficient. Now although *Graduation Ball* is a staple repertory piece inasmuch as it has a wide appeal for most audiences seeing it for the first few times, it is *not* a staple repertory piece in the sense that it will easily bear any number of re-seeings. Familiarity with it breeds contempt, and only rarely can the experienced spectator recapture the pleasure he felt when he first saw it. As a result he often starts to under-estimate its virtues, or berate the performances.

Lichine's choreography is not particularly subtle, but its high spirits and inventive fluency can, in a good performance, carry all before them. Most of the characterisations are remarkably good, and the construction of the ballet is unusually sound for a *ballet bouffe.* Its details are such that they can easily be over-exaggerated, but basically they have a delightful spontaneity. The entrance and eventual exit of the cadets, the opening of the dance, the dance impromptu for the pigtailed *enfant terrible,* and the Flirtation Mazurka for the Headmistress and the General, these are delights not staled by custom and worthy of comparison with Massine at his best. The Benois setting and costumes have a dignified glitter, and the Strauss music, expertly arranged by Antal Dorati, has an enchantingly harum-scarum exuberance.

Although we in England never saw the De Basil production of *Graduation Ball* until the company was literally on its last legs, those 1947 performances rehearsed by Lichine himself had a quality which very few subsequent versions have attained. Unquestionably the best of current productions is on every count that given by the Royal Danish Ballet. Here the regrettable tendency towards Americanisation of the ballet, which can be seen everywhere else, is fortunately avoided, and the ballet is given with a specifically European charm, and a marked feeling for period style. However, this faithful realisation of the choreographer's intentions is by no means common, and by and large most productions of the ballet have degenerated into a good-natured romp.

Of the individual performances Lichine and Riabouchinska were themselves superb as the Leading Cadet and the Leading Junior Girl. No one except Lichine has quite captured the Cadet's gauche confidence, his adolescent embarrassment and cheeky appeal. Fredbjorn Bjornsson has come closest to the rôle, and in early years Vladimir Dokoudovsky was almost equally effective. Eric Braun, for Ballet Theatre, showed a prodigious jump, but had little or no command of the style required, while for Festival Ballet, Keith Beckett proved far too exaggeratedly cute in the rôle. Currently Festival Ballet entrust the part to Vassilie Trunoff, who is moderately good without being outstanding.

Of the girls who have danced the Riabouchinska rôle, the Danish Inge Sand, although perhaps a trifle too bossy, has probably had the best of it. Anita Landa and Belinda Wright both proved more than adequate, while Ruth Ann Koesun (for Ballet Theatre) was charming. The part has also been danced in England, with rather less success, by Olga Morosova and Nina Stroganova.

Of the Drummers seen in England, Orlov has never been equalled. There was a sort of heroic quality to his dancing, together with a *panache* and ease that no one else has truly captured. However, there have been quite a number of brave tries, including Vassilkovsky (for Kirsta's Ballet Russe), Enrique Martinez and Kelly Brown for Ballet Theatre, Henning Kronstam for the Danes, and Flemming Flindt for Festival Ballet. The part has also been danced in England by Poul Gnatt, Frank Schaufuss, John Kriza, John Gilpin, Michael Hogan, Louis Godfrey and Terry Gilbert.

As the General and the Headmistress no one is ever likely to efface the memory of the Danish pair, Sven Erik Jensen and Gerda Karstens. However, John Taras, Hans Brenaa and Peter White have all been good, while Paul Grinwis was notably successful as the Headmistress. Other performances in the ballet worthy of note have been provided by Barbara Lloyd and Mette Mollerup as the "Pigtail" girl, Genevieve Moulin and Renee Jeanmaire in the Fouetté Competition, Vladimir Skouratoff as the Scotsman (for De Basil) and Toni Lander as La Sylphide (for Kirsta).

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET

July
2-15 The Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow.
September
13 Autumn season opens at Covent Garden with two creations — MacMillan's *Suite of Danses* and Rodrigues's *Jabez and the Devil.*

THE ROYAL BALLET
(Touring Section)

June
19 The Odeon, Southend.
26 The Theatre Royal, Norwich.
August
29 Baalbeck Festival, The Lebanon.

BALLET RAMBERT
at the Sadler's Wells Theatre

July
18 *Night Shadow, La Sylphide.*
19 *Night Shadow, La Sylphide.*
20 *Night Shadow, Czerny-ana, Night and Silence, Hazana.*
21 *Night Shadow, Czerny-ana, Night and Silence, Hazana.*
22 **(M)** *Coppélia.*
22 **(E)** *Coppélia.*
24 *La Sylphide, Night Shadow.*
25 *Laiderette, A Place in the Desert, Night and Silence, Façade.*
26 *Laiderette, A Place in the Desert, Night and Silence, Façade.*
27 Programme of Antony Tudor ballets.
28 *Giselle, A Place in the Desert.*
29 **(M)** *Giselle, A Place in the Desert.*
29 **(E)** *Giselle, A Place in the Desert.*
31 *Two Brothers, Night Shadow, Winter Night, Hazana.*
August
1 *Two Brothers, Night Shadow, Winter Night, Hazana.*
2 Programme of Antony Tudor ballets.
3 *Winter Night, Czerny-ana, A Place in the Desert, Gala Performance.*
4 *La Sylphide, Night Shadow.*
5 **(M)** *La Sylphide, A Place in the Desert.*
5 **(E)** *La Sylphide, A Place in the Desert.*

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31-August 5 *Swan Lake* (new Bourmeister production of Act 2), *The Witch Boy, Bourrée Fantasque.*
7-12 *The Snow Maiden.*
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THE LENINGRAD STATE KIROV BALLET
at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

26 *The Sleeping Beauty.*
27 *Giselle.*
28 *Giselle.*
29 *Giselle.*
30 *Swan Lake.*
July
1 **(M)** *Swan Lake.*
1 **(E)** *Swan Lake.*
3 *Swan Lake.*
4 Gala Programme *(Chopiniana, Taras Bulba, The Nutcracker, Shadows,* etc.).
5 Gala Programme.
6 *Giselle.*
7 *Giselle.*
8 **(M)** Gala Programme.
8 **(E)** *The Stone Flower.*
10 Gala Programme.
11 *Swan Lake.*
12 *Swan Lake.*
14 *The Sleeping Beauty.*
15 **(M)** *The Stone Flower.*
15 **(E)** *The Sleeping Beauty.*

WESTERN THEATRE BALLET

June
26 The Lincoln Theatre, Lincoln.
July
24 The Repertory Theatre, Northampton.
31 The Repertory Theatre, Birmingham (2 weeks).
September
4 The Empire Theatre, Edinburgh.

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